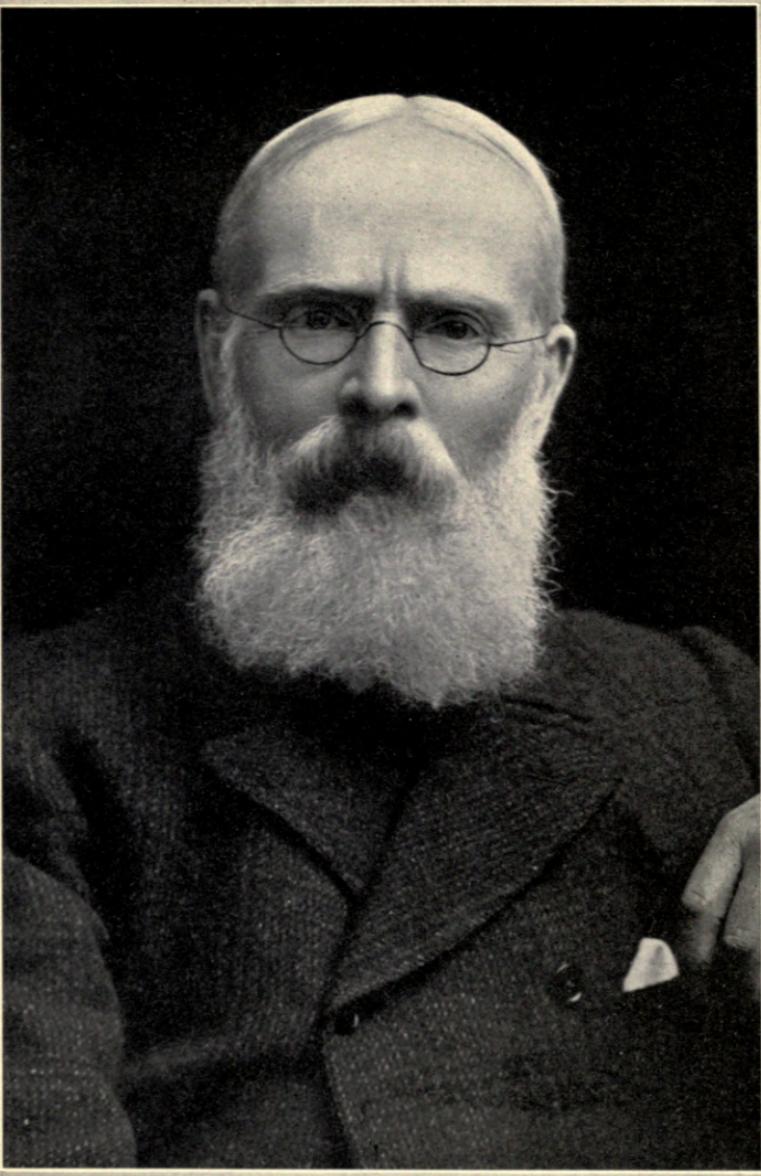


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ART AND ANECDOTE



Photo

Russell & Son

I am Gentleman
yours obedient Servt
William F. Yeames

ART AND ANECDOTE

RECOLLECTIONS OF
WILLIAM FREDERICK YEAMES, R.A.
HIS LIFE AND HIS FRIENDS

BY

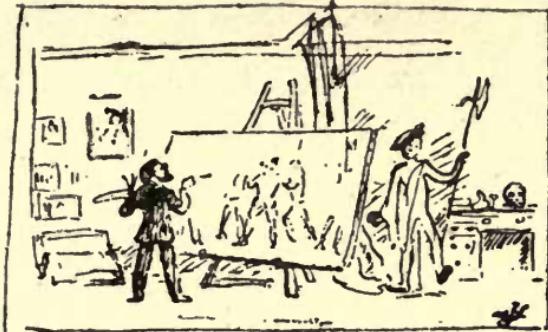
M. H. STEPHEN SMITH

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DEDICATED
WITH DEEPEST AFFECTION
AND GRATITUDE
TO
'T'ANNIE',
WIDOW OF
WILLIAM FREDERICK YEAMES, R.A.

2066481



Nail favoured youth! whose genius upward flies
 Warmed by the radiance of Italian skies—
 What fate has cast thee on this northern shore
 To shame its sons with Academic lore
 To make them curvans of thy bold design.—
 Thy vigorous compo. — and thy flowing line.
 'Tis thine full soon to see the wondering gate
 Where forty idiots make young genius wait—
 Thine too, to teach us how we may combine
 Pure English feeling, with Antigae design
 Broad light and shade, with colour clear yet cool.—
 We hail this founder of an unborn school! —

And if we lost sweet William, holds first place—
 He shines in darkness with an equal grace
 Courteous and kind, he never hurt a friend—
 So eager always prints a "pros" to hand.—
 Ready to praise — to reprobation slow—
 He gains us kindness, what he loses in "go"
 For ever lose his fame, the world to tell.
 The like, no Age shall ever parallel.



PREFACE

I FEEL I cannot do better than preface this short life of my uncle with the above little sketch with its accompanying few lines, written by John Hodgson, when both were young men; for they embody in affectionate jest all that I would say, but in saying, might be accused of

prejudice, whereas coming from the pen of another, it but portrays the feelings of his fellow artists and friends.

This little book was originally intended only for the perusal of the immediate members of my family, so I feel somewhat diffident in placing it before a reading public, as I am aware it should have been the work of a more capable hand; but as no one had the same opportunities as I had, it has been left to me to make the attempt. I possess no pretensions to style or literary talent, whilst grammar has always been a particular *bête noire* of mine; neither have I had any of the data, papers or letters with which biographers always seem fortified. I have therefore had to draw much on memory and the few notes which I fortunately jotted down during long quiet talks with my uncle in the last few years of his life. In consequence, I must crave the forbearance of my readers for any mistakes as to names, dates, etc., and ask them to bear in mind that this little volume is not intended as a literary memorial, but merely as a pleasant memory of a much loved and very human man who "loved his fellow men," together with a short account of his life and friends, and anecdotes of people he had met. Of the merits or otherwise of his work I am silent, for fear I might be accused again of prejudice, and because my readers can judge for

themselves by merely entering any of the chief municipal galleries of England.

To mention "Amy Robsart" in the Tate, or "And when did you last see your Father" in the Walker Art Gallery at Liverpool, will bring his work to the minds of most.

M. H. STEPHEN SMITH.

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ART AND ANECDOTE

RECOLLECTION I

The birth of William Frederick Yeames—The family name—Robert Yeames of Ironside's army—William Yeames, who saved a favourite book from the Great Fire of London—The Killigrews—Henry Killigrew is sent to report on the beauty of Mary Queen of Scots—Thomas, “the King's Jester,” becomes “Governor of the Duck Ponds”—Anne's epitaph by Dryden—John Lamb, Dean of Ely—John Yeames goes to Russia—The Empress Catherine—Henry Yeames, Consul-General of the Black Sea—Murder of the Emperor Paul—The British bull-dog and the Imperial tassel—The short-sighted Mr. Wright—The Lady of the Shawl—Miss Yeames's romance—The family of von Rahl—Napoleon's embargo on Malta—William Yeames, British Consul at Taganrog—His marriage—Travelling in Russia—Marie Antoinette's cook and Father Confessor escape into Russia—The supposed Madame de La Motte—My grandmother sees Moscow in flames on Napoleon's evacuation.

WITH Russia buried beneath its winter pall of snow and ice, there was born on December 18th, 1835, in the town of Taganrog, on the shores of the Sea of Azof, the third son of William Yeames, His Britannic Majesty's Consul, and of Eliza Mary, his wife.

The boy was christened “William” after his father, and “Frederick” after his great-uncle, Frederick von Rahl of Hesse-Cassel.

As I know how invariably tedious is the narration of other people's ancestry, I will touch but lightly on ours—just sufficiently to trace what we are pleased to call "heredity," with the mention of an item or two such as may carry a spark of outside interest. For surely my uncle's rigid standard of right and wrong was not entirely instilled into him by the method of that rod of which I shall make mention later, but was inborn from a strain of the Cromwellian Robert Yeames of Ironside's army, who fought and bled on Marston Moor? On the other hand, my uncle's social gifts, his marvellous *joie de vivre* and almost boyish interest in the things of this life, were legacies from the gay and gifted Killigrews of the Stuart Court. His love of travel appears in the family many generations back in the person of the Yeames who migrated to America with the Pilgrims, as is indicated by his son's name "Gershom" (a stranger in a strange land, Exodus ii. 22), which appears in the annals of the State of Massachusetts in the war against the Indians, known as King Philip's war, in 1675. Nor should we overlook, in view of his great love of books, the careful William Yeames, who rescued a favourite book from the Great Fire of London and proudly recorded the fact, together with the names of his children, on its flyleaf. This book, in a wonderful state of preservation, was returned to the family of its

original owners a short time ago, through the kindness of Judge Snagge, who discovered it amongst a collection he had bought and sent it to my uncle.

The family seems to have originated in Norfolk for there are "*Yems*" (meaning "Stag" in Saxon), "*Yemmes*," and "*Yemys*" whose names appear in documents and inscriptions as early as 1339 as holders of lands and manors.

These ancestors are too remote to be of any real value to us in tracing elements of character. It is enough to say that whilst Robert Yeames was fighting as a Parliamentarian, the Killigrews, ancestors on the Distaff Side, were warmly espousing the other cause and going into exile with their royal masters.

The name "Killigrew" is derived from the word "Erigrew," signifying "Eagle's Grove," their original home in Cornwall. The family numbered writers, painters, clerics, and courtiers amongst its members—especially courtiers, in which path in life they appear to have been particularly distinguished. There was Sir William Killigrew, Groom of the Privy Chamber, and Chamberlain of the Exchequer to Queen Elizabeth; and also his brother Henry, who was sent by the Queen as Ambassador to the Court of Mary Queen of Scots. His real mission, however, was to find out for his Royal mistress if Mary's beauty was as great as rumour made

out. The fact that he appears to have made an excellent impression at Holyrood, where his portrait still hangs, and at the same time to have retained the favour of his own somewhat capricious Sovereign, points to his possession of considerable gifts as a diplomatist.

The third brother Robert was Vice-Chamberlain to Queen Henrietta Maria, and left three sons, William, Thomas, and Henry, who all figured more or less at Court, and according to an old writer were "distinguished by their talents, wit, and loyalty."

Thomas, who was born in 1612, appears to have been specially favoured, being such an amusing fellow that he was dubbed "the King's Jester." As page to the ill-fated Charles I he was arrested as a Royalist and, after many vicissitudes, managed to rejoin the exiles in France and became the bosom friend of his late master's son, the Prince of Wales. He returned to England on the Restoration and was appointed Groom of the Royal Bedchamber, thereby, according to an authority of that time, being "allowed access to the Royal Person when persons of the first Dignity were refused," a fact easily accounted for by the well-known preference of the Stuarts for amusement rather than for affairs of State.

To keep him near the person of His Most Sacred Majesty a grant of a thousand a year in

connection with the onerous post of “Keeper of the Duck Ponds,” situated in the gardens of St. James’s Palace, was conferred on him. The salary (if ever paid) certainly seems a trifle out of proportion to the job, though the gardens in which lay these delectable ponds were beautifully laid out, and filled with rare birds and beasts from foreign climes. They were, moreover, thrown open to the public on Sundays, when if so minded the King’s loyal subjects could gaze unrestrained on the Royal person. In the intervals of his arduous duties, however, Thomas found time to write at least eleven dramas, which were staged at his theatre of Drury Lane, and in one or two of which “Sweet Nell” herself figured. A beautiful portrait of the “Jester” by Vandyke in the Chatsworth Collection depicts him as a most likeable young man; but another painting by the same master, with his friend Carey, gives him, I regret to say, a most distinct “morning after the night before” appearance.

We are told by certain old writers that his brother William “suffered materially in both purse and person” for his adherence to the Royal cause (history unfortunately does not mention what it was that happened to the “person.”) Recompense, however, came with the Restoration, when he received the honour of knighthood and post of Privy Councillor. He cheered his

declining years by writing essays on the instability of human happiness.

Henry, being the youngest son, naturally entered the Church: he held a stall in Westminster from which he was ejected by the Parliamentarians, only to be swept back by the joyful tide of the Restoration.

The most charming member of the family, however, appears to have been Dr. Henry Killigrew's daughter Anne, who was celebrated not only as a painter and poetess of no mean order, but also for her beauty and—most rare of all at the Court in which she figured as Lady-in-waiting to the Duchess of York—her virtue. In her epitaph, written by Dryden (she died of small-pox at the early age of twenty-five), he calls her :

“A Grace for beauty, and a Muse for wit.”

She lies buried in the Savoy Chapel.

Another of Henry's daughters, Elizabeth, married John Lambe, Dean of Ely and Chaplain to William and Mary. If the testimony on her tombstone in the old church of Whethampstead in Hertfordshire goes for anything, she must have enjoyed great connubial bliss. The inscription is couched in such quaint and tender terms that I cannot refrain from quoting it :

“Here lyeth the body of Elizabeth ye daughter of Dr Henry Killigrew of ye ancient family of ye Killigrews

of Cornwall, and the most entirely beloved wife of John Lambe, Rector of this church, Dean of Ely, and Chaplain in ordinary to his Majesty, by whom he had issue five sons and five daughters. She departed this life in the fifty first year of her age. To mention some of her virtues only, though great ones, would lessen her character who was a most eminent example of all the virtues that adorn her sex."

One of her five daughters married William Yeames, and their son, John Lambe Yeames (1707-1787), was the man who first forged the family connection with Russia, maintained by his descendants uninterruptedly until quite lately. For, having accepted an invitation from the Empress Catherine the Great to superintend the construction of the Russian Navy, he built Russia's first frigates, and twelve men-of-war at Archangel. Full records of his work are to be found in the books of the Russian Admiralty. He received "military" rank as "General," finally becoming "Surveyor of the Russian Navy." It was said that the Empress held him in much esteem, and had such confidence in his skill that she always insisted on being on board his ships when they were being launched!

His son, Henry Savage Yeames, became the first British Consul-General of the Black Sea in 1803. And after his death in 1819, his son James continued with the post with equal success, if Bremmer on Russia is to be believed, for he mentions in his book (page 498, Vol. II) ". . .

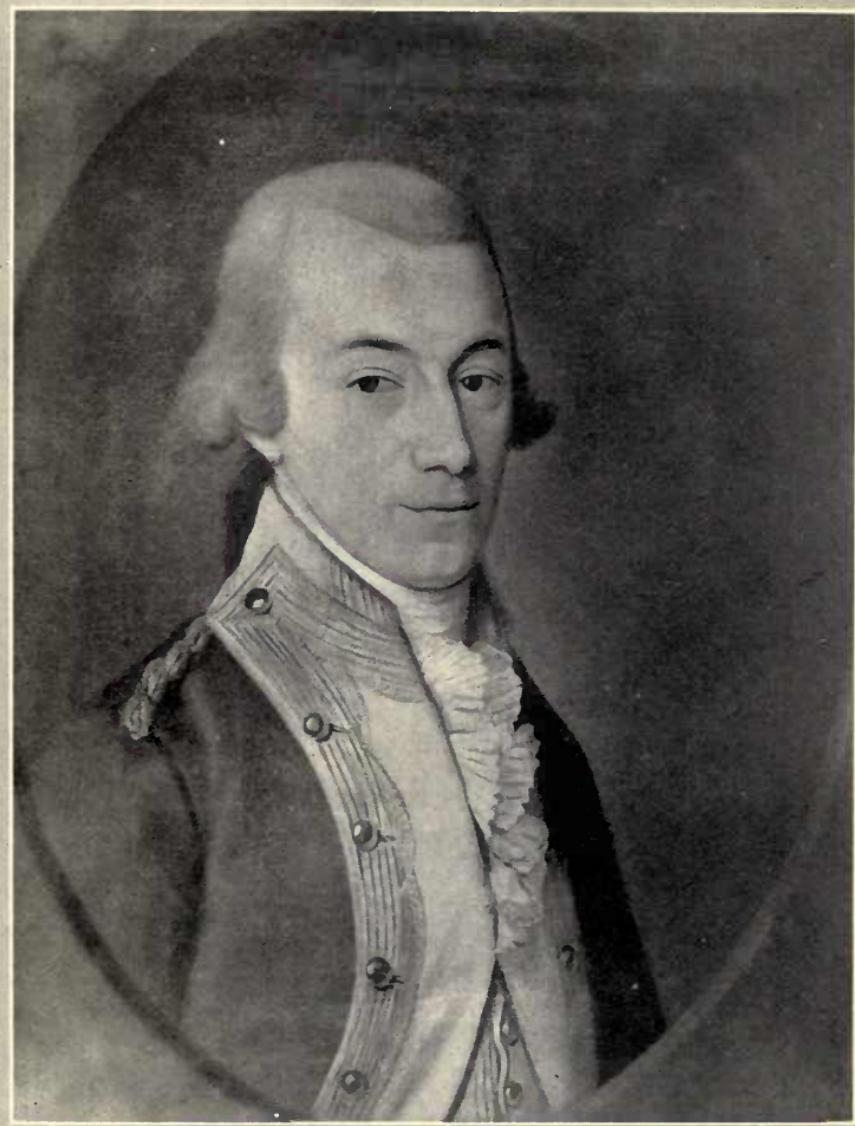
English merchants, whose interests and rights are ably defended by Mr. Yeames, British Consul-General, well known as one of the most talented men on our Consular Service."

Thus we held the post of Consul-General in our family for fifty years, only relinquishing it on the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854.

Those days were full of poignant interest, but alas, very little information has been handed down, since a written document in that country was about as safe a possession to its owner as a barrel of gunpowder. And even an Englishman's life was unsafe.

My uncle remembers his father telling him how angry his grandfather had been on the morning of the 25th March, 1801, when he and his brother James burst into his dressing-room, whilst he was shaving, with the exciting news that the Tsar Paul had been assassinated. "Silence, boys!" he cried, "What you are saying is enough to send us all to Siberia!" An example of the conditions of life under which English subjects lived in Russia in those days!

The news, however, proved true enough. In fact the knowledge was common property in the "best circles" *even before the crime was perpetrated*, for the details were actually being calmly discussed at a big ball in St. Petersburg whilst the tragedy was being enacted only a few miles away. This event will not seem so very



JOHN LAMBE YEAMES,

Reproduced by kind permission of Alexander Yeames Whishaw, Esq.

remote from the present times when I mention that an old friend of my uncle's, Mrs. John Hodgson (widow of the R.A.), told me a short time before she died, less than fifteen years ago, how as a young girl she had seen the Tsar's murderer, Count Pahlen, at a ball at Riga, to which town he had been sent as Governor. She described him as a tall grey-haired old man of distinguished presence, wearing a magnificent uniform with a red sword sash. As it had been with just such a sash as this that the Tsar had been strangled, she said she gazed at it with awe, imagining it to be one and the same with which the awful deed had been committed.

The story goes—so my uncle told me, and it was common knowledge at the time—that when the conspirators entered the Tsar's bedchamber they found it empty, and were about to leave, when one of the number laid his hand on the bed and found it *warm!* A careful search was then made in the room which disclosed a scrap of white material stuck in a crack in the panelling behind the tapestry. This was a piece of the Tsar's nightshirt which had caught as the secret door closed after him. The woodwork was forced, and crouching behind it was the wretched Emperor. The outer door by which he had intended to make his escape had jammed. It was as though Destiny, closing every loophole of escape, had determined to end the wretch's miserable existence.

A man of great strength, Pahlen strangled him then and there with his own sword sash.

Had he not done so, Russia would have lost a great Tsar in the person of his son, who, with several others of the blood Royal, was already marked down for execution by this maniac. Thus it was that Pahlen and others known to have been concerned in the crime were never brought to "justice" for the deed.

An incident small in itself, but marking the spirit of the times, may perhaps be included for this very reason. My uncle's grandfather was playing, as a child, in some apartments in the unoccupied palace of Ropcha near St. Petersburg, to which the children were allowed access, when he saw a bundle of bloodstained towels roll out from behind a large mirror which some workmen were taking down. That this was the palace in which the Emperor Peter III was murdered, may perhaps throw some light on the matter.

On another occasion, one of our English connections nearly got into very serious trouble with an imported bull-terrier. The dog espied a gold tassel of the Tsar Paul's robe trailing in the snow behind the Imperial sledge, sprang upon it, and fixing his teeth into it, was dragged through Petersburg to the horror and consternation of all beholders, including his master, who never expected to see him again. However,

either the tassel, or the animal came off, and all ended well. But such an act of *lèse-majesté* could only be punished by either death or Siberia ; the question being, which would have been the sufferer—the dog or its owner ?

Another connection named Tom Wright also came very near to banishment. He had the temerity to refuse to stop his sledge and stand bareheaded in the snow, as all good Russians had to do when the Tsar passed. For one fine day, sighting the Imperial equipage, Tom ordered his coachman to drive as hard as he could and not to draw rein till he reached the English Club. The Royal sledge with its three horses passed at top speed—so did Tom's ! He arrived gaily at the Club, and descended full of pride at his prowess. His triumph, however, was but short-lived, for within ten minutes there arrived emissaries from the palace, inquiring who was the Englishman who drove a troika with two bays and a grey, and wore a fur coat with a sable collar. This of course was easily ascertained and only the personal influence of the British Ambassador, who explained that Mr. Wright was very short-sighted, saved the latter from untold penalties. As it was, justice for once was tempered with mercy, and a Royal ukase went forth to the effect that in future Mr. Wright must wear spectacles, which Mr. Wright continued to do till that fateful morning on which the Yeames

boys burst into their father's room with the tidings of the tyrant's death.

One of the Yeames' relatives in Petersburg married Countess B——, daughter of Catherine the Great; no doubt selected for the honour as being the richest bachelor of British nationality in Petersburg, and also to avoid complications with regard to the throne. For Catherine was no fool.

It is regrettable to add that after her marriage the lady would hardly condescend to associate with the British colony, looking down upon the merchants and their wives as not being of sufficiently blue blood for her to mix with!

Amongst the little community was the delightfully "Cranford-minded" Miss Yeames, who at the first State Ball to which she was taken, became greatly distressed at the condition of a *très décolleté* lady walking before her, because she felt sure that "the poor thing must have dropped part of her dress, and was not aware of it." Indeed she was restrained with some difficulty from offering the lady her own shawl.

I have often wondered if this was the same Miss Yeames who later figured in a little romance of her own. I rather think it may have been. A certain Mr. Watts, a young man of some wealth and connection, was making the "grand tour" at the age of about twenty-four or five, when he fell ill with typhoid fever at St. Peters-

burg. In those days there were no such institutions as nursing homes or hospitals, but as he carried letters of introduction to the Yeames family, the chief British household in the town, he was taken to their house, where Miss Yeames, daughter of John Lambe Yeames, and by that time a spinster hovering on those nebulous years surrounding the "forties," undertook to nurse him.

Now in those unenlightened times, a spinster of thirty or thirty-five was looked upon as quite one of the "back numbers" for whom matrimony was altogether out of the question--a person relegated to assisting her more fortunate sisters with their children through measles or smallpox; superintending the servants; doing all the disagreeable jobs no one else wanted to do; mellowing in character as others grew selfish in proportion. Consequently, when on his recovery Mr. Watts proposed marriage to her, consternation fell on everyone! At her age! When she was so useful! And then, the difference in years! Miss Yeames was as surprised as anyone and, pointing out the last item, refused him. But Mr. Watts was genuinely and deeply in love. He begged her to reconsider her decision. All to no effect. Miss Yeames had been in the bonds of spinsterhood too long. Mr. Watts was in despair. He implored her to be his. She told him he would alter his mind as soon as

he left Petersburg. "Never!" he cried. Finally terms were arranged. He was to continue his travels and to try to forget her; but if at the end of three years he still remained in the same mind, she would marry him. Two and a half years passed, and then the gentleman returned, saying he could stand it no longer. He insisted upon an early marriage, which resulted very happily. The only fly in her ointment was his extreme jealousy, since he was unable to imagine that anyone could possibly see her without succumbing to her charms! In spite of their respective ages, he was the first to depart this life, for she lived to a ripe old age at Honiton, where she died twenty-eight years after him, regretted by rich and poor alike.

It was remarkable at how early an age girls were then given (the only word, as their own inclinations were not often consulted) in marriage. One old friend of my uncle's told him how one day she was suddenly told to put away her dolls, wash her hands and face, take off her pinafore and come down to the drawing-room, where she was introduced without further palaver to her future husband. The marriage was remarkably successful, as *apparently* so many of those unions were in those days, probably because girls were not trained to reason, or decide things for themselves. But she never addressed or spoke of her husband without the prefix "Mr." Indeed I

used to wonder if she ever called him anything else, even in private.

But this is a digression. The wife of Henry Savage Yeames was a charming little woman, as the accompanying portrait of her in the delicious "mob-cap" will show. She was a Wilhelmina von Rahl, daughter of Baron von Rahl of Hesse-Cassel, banker to the Tsar, a man of great wealth, which however seems to have been quickly dissipated by his son, a genial officer in the Russian Army. The latter must have been possessed of a pretty wit, as exemplified by a *bon mot* of his own composition—all he left behind him. "I have been through all the Services and Ranks," he was wont to say :

"Je commence ma vie en étant un Amiral (Ami Rahl)
Et puis je suis devenu un General (Gene Rahl)
Et maintenant, je suis un Caporal" (Capo Rahl).

By which it was evident that he retained the buoyant spirits of his youth in spite of misfortune, which was lucky for him as he ended his days in the Caucasus—the Tunis of the Russian Army.

As British Consul-General, Henry Savage Yeames and his wife resided at Odessa, where they brought up their four children, one girl and three boys, Henry, James, and William.

Then came the war with France, and to combat Napoleon's embargo on Malta, the Foreign Office sent an order to their British Consul to victual

that island with the fine hard wheat of the Crimea. The order was well and faithfully carried out, and incidentally was the origin of the great grain firm of William Yeames & Co., one of the first British firms in Russia.

So whilst James, now married to Elizabeth Whishaw, continued to reside at Odessa, William carried on his work as British Consul at Taganrog. He married Eliza Mary, daughter of John Henley, by whom he had seven children, my uncle William being their fourth child. Mrs. William Yeames was quite a personality. Of small, dainty stature with tiny hands and feet, she was yet of a very determined character, with a clever brain and ready wit; a good *raconteuse* and linguist and, according to no less an authority on the subject than Sir William Allen, the artist, who met her at the Countess Potochi's, a most charming woman. I can only remember her as a dignified little old lady with strong likes and dislikes, and an iron will which was law to her grown-up sons and daughters. In her youth she had been a fine and daring horsewoman, in spite of her Liliputian hands. She was also a great traveller and insisted on accompanying her father when he visited the vast Potochi estates situated both in Russia and Poland of which he had the management. And it must be remembered that travelling in those times, before the advent of railroads, steamers, telephones, and cables was quite an

adventurous business, and not the comfortable matter it is to-day. Days and nights were spent in the same cramped vehicle, sledge, or carriage, according to the time of year ; versts of shocking roads over solitary steppes ; through dense forests ; with fierce dry heat and clouds of dust, or intense cold and blinding snowstorms ; a thermometer so low that to stand still for a few moments meant frost-bite ! Even in a sledge one ran this chance, and my grandmother used to relate how, when travelling during an especially cold winter, she was suddenly surprised to find her hands becoming curiously warm ; but pulling her gloves off on reaching their destination she was horror-struck to find them full of blood. Her father immediately hurried her into the yard and having broken the ice in a bucket, made her plunge her hands into the freezing water. The pain was horrible, but it saved her hands from possible amputation.

The short Russian Spring and Autumn are of course glorious, but for travelling these seasons were trying because of the oceans of mud. The posthouses were terrible affairs in those days, being sometimes situated underground, and were dirty and verminous to the last degree.

And yet in spite of all this, my grandmother thoroughly enjoyed these travels, thinking little more of a journey from end to end of Russia than her descendants do now of a trip from

London to Edinburgh. She met many interesting people, and learnt to know more of that great country of silence and mystery, half European, half Asiatic, with its crust of civilization covering its barbaric interior, than did most of its own inhabitants.

These were times of great upheaval in Europe, and many French *émigrés* fled to Russia to avoid the guillotine. Once, on reaching the Polish-Russian frontier, my great-grandfather Henley found two agitated Frenchmen at the post-house, half demented with anxiety because they could not get posthorses to take them across. He could not make out why they should be so upset about it, nor their extravagant gratitude on his offering them seats in his own troika, until they had safely crossed the border, when they explained that one was the Father Confessor, and the other the Head Chef to Marie Antoinette, and that both were escaping from France. One would have thought safety would have been acquired as soon as they had crossed the French frontier, but their posts seemed to have weighed heavily upon their minds. Another story my grandmother used to relate concerned the person of a most attractive Frenchwoman, who mixed freely in the best society, appeared *au fait* with everything concerning the late French Court, but about whom nothing could be discovered. She had always plenty of money,

for the British Consul had orders to hand her periodically a certain sum on behalf of the French Government. She dressed fashionably and well, but was never seen in a low-cut dress when low necks were almost *de rigueur*. The reason for this peculiarity became apparent, when on her death a "V" was found branded upon her shoulder. I am uncertain whether she died in London or in Russia, but it was commonly supposed she was the notorious Madame de la Motte of the Diamond Necklace Scandal.

My grandmother had endless experiences on her travels, but I think the one that stood out most in her memory was the sight of Moscow, smouldering in its fires, after Napoleon's evacuation. For she came into that city a few days after he evacuated it, and it was still burning. She said that it was obvious the fire had been caused by incendiarism, for there were traces of oil throughout the city.

RECOLLECTION II

The First Personal Recollection (rather touching !)—The family prepare to visit relatives in St. Petersburg—The journey across Russia—An adventure on the Sea of Azof—Brother James is nearly lost—Moscow—Arrival at Petersburg—Gaieties—Ice-hills—The return to Taganrog—Alexander I—The family sail for Malta—First voyage by steamboat—They arrive at Naples—Visit Vesuvius—Nearly lose Brother Alfred down the crater—Travel to Rome—Leghorn—Florence—Padua—First train journey—Venice—Lessons in swimming—Death of Father—Birth of sister—Uncle James arrives—M. Chappuis is engaged—Family start for Odessa, via Trieste and Vienna—Sail down the Danube—Medical examination on Turkish frontier—Carriage horses bolt—Winter in Odessa—William Yeames's career decided on by Aunt Betsy—Family travel across Europe to Dresden in search of education—Visit Wallachian salt mines—Warsaw—Life in Dresden—Artistic education begun under Nieman and Franken—Herr Vogel von Vogelstein—His boy friends—The carriage of the Head Master of the Polytechnic—England's last duellist.

AS all orthodox memoirs always embody "first recollections," I naturally felt it my duty to ask my uncle about his earliest memories. He answered promptly, and I regret to say his reply immediately put him outside the Washington pale; for it was impressed not only on his mind, but elsewhere . . . It was a whipping which his father gave him for telling a lie! The fault would probably nowa-

days be called a “flight of imagination coming from the mind of an artistic child,” but no poetic licence was allowed in those days. A spade was called a spade, and the paths of rectitude were pointed out by the rod. Thus it was in my uncle’s case, and he got a good licking. Unfortunately for this veracious history, he could not remember what the lie was about ; but as he never forgot the whipping, the lesson was well impressed and the main object attained.

The bringing up of their children by William Yeames and his wife was a very thorough and Spartan affair. No disobedience, and no coddling ! If they felt cold, no grousing over fires was allowed ; they would be turned out into the garden to run about till they felt warm. Nothing was allowed to be left on dinner plates ; discipline was the order of the day. There were but few toys, my uncle’s favourite being a tiny curiously shaped cloth monkey, still lovingly laid by amidst laces and lavender by the dear lady to whom this book is dedicated.

Education appears to have been the primary objective of their youthful days and certain it is that the children all grew up cultured and polished men and women, at the same time retaining their “Early Victorian” *cachet*. Prefixes to elders’ names were always used ; even brothers and sisters would be called “Brother” Henry, “Sister” Louisa, and so forth.

My uncle's next recollection was more pleasant and was of a great journey across Russia to pay some visits to relatives living in St. Petersburg. This would have been an awe-inspiring undertaking for anyone except such an intrepid traveller as Madame Yeames ; for it entailed over a month of sledge driving, during the coldest period of the year when the days were at their shortest. The winter was chosen for two reasons ; firstly, because the Sea of Azof being icebound, there was no shipping on the roadstead, and therefore practically no work for the Consul ; and secondly, because progress was quicker and easier on good hard snow than on the quagmire roads of spring or in the dust and heat of summer. The party consisted of the father, mother, and six children—John, the youngest, being but six weeks old—a couple of nurses and coachmen. As a precaution against frostbite, each child was packed into a fur-lined bag, tied up at the mouth. The father and mother and smaller children travelled in the first sledge, the nurses and the others in the second. Hardly, however, had they left Taganrog when it was noticed that a heavy thaw had set in, so they had perforce to return to the town to await another fall of snow. After which the family was repacked into its receptacles, and they started off once more.

Even without a family of children (including the precious baby), this journey sounds a little



MADAME YEAMES (*née* WILHELMINA VON RAHL OF HESSE CASSEL.)

startling, stretching as it did from the very south almost to the north of that great country, a continent in itself. A thousand miles over windswept steppes ; through primæval forests inhabited only by wolves, bears, and foxes ; over icebound lakes, rivers, and morasses on which the only sign of life was a solitary fisherman's hut pitched on the ice itself. The fisherman carried on his trade through holes in the ice, the catch freezing into stark rigidity as soon as it was landed. Then between versts of snow-buried country would arise an occasional village, gay with coloured roofs and ornamented door posts, in which was generally to be found the "post-house," a dirty and inconvenient place, guiltless of sanitary arrangements, bare of comforts and often necessities, and so filthy that my grandmother, refusing to trust to bedding, would order great bundles of sweet smelling hay and straw, which was always available, to be brought in at every stopping-place and spread upon the floor for the children to sleep on. My uncle told me he could well remember the bundles being brought in and shaken out, and himself rolling in their fragrant softness. This was a wise proceeding on her part, for she was an old and hardened traveller in Russia. On one occasion she saw what she at first took to be a black skirting to a room in a posthouse, but later realized that it was a mass of fleas. Such

were the joys of Continental travel in those days !

In the morning the little party would gaily pack themselves into their sledges ; and, chattering and laughing, would set off over the snow, sparkling in the sunshine ; or else, should the day be grey with heavy snowclouds, they would snuggle down amidst their furs, till the storm was over. Sometimes, during a very heavy fall, they would have to wait a day or two at a post-house ; for with roads and signposts blotted out travel was dangerous. It was an easy and not unusual thing to miss one's way on the open steppe. The traveller might well find himself after a hard day's driving back at his morning's starting-point, having driven in a circle. Many a sledge-driver was only discovered when the snows melted. In fact two of those very boys, the baby John and his elder brother James, as grown men, almost lost their lives when sledging across the Sea of Azof.

Every winter the sea would become a frozen thoroughfare from coast to coast, the surface of the ice intersected by sledge tracks. On this occasion the two brothers were returning from a wedding at Glaferovka, on the opposite coast, accompanied by two friends, a gentleman and his daughter (whereby hangs a little romance, for the lady who shared the danger ultimately became the wife of John). They set out in brilliant

sunshine, but half-way across met a sledge coming rapidly towards them, the driver of which told them they had better drive all they knew, or else return immediately, as the South-west Wind had begun to blow. Having good horses, and being familiar with the route, they decided to press forward. Now the South-west Wind is most dangerous at this time of the year: once it begins, it generally ends by blowing the ice out to sea, and every year fishermen are drowned who have not got back to land in time. So whipping up their horses, the coachmen began to make a good pace in the direction of Taganrog, when suddenly they found themselves enveloped in a sea fog. They still made headway ; but the fog became so dense that the coachman of the leading sledge was completely bewildered and lost his bearings, so that when they came to a spot where a number of sledge tracks crossed and recrossed, he drew up, and turning to his master, admitted that he was quite nonplussed as to which to follow. Matters were now serious, for if the wrong track was taken, it would mean driving straight for the sea. And even if it were the right one, it would only be of use providing they could reach the shore before the ice parted with the land.

The gentlemen of the party got out and examined the traces in the snow. But all the tracks looked alike, and it was the merest toss

up which they should take ; whilst time meant everything. Each man followed a track a short way, and on discovering fresh spoor, it was decided to follow the track on which it lay, whether it led to safety or death.

The coachmen laid on their whips, and the animals raced over the snow-covered ice, on the surface of which ominous cracks were already beginning to appear. On and on they went, uncertain as to what was to be the end of the journey, until the horses began to show signs of evident fatigue. The coachmen alternately coaxed and beat them, but with less and less effect. One horse alone seemed to understand the danger and struggled bravely forward, without a single touch of the thong. In doing so, he put life into the others. And to that horse, they practically owed their lives. Then night fell, but not a star could be seen by which to take their bearings. But they forged on, the horses galloping and trotting in unison, troika fashion. Then suddenly, like a curtain being raised, the fog lifted ; and, to their great relief and joy, they saw twinkling before them the lights of Taganrog.

But before they finally reached the shore the ice began to crack and sink beneath their weight, and before land was reached several feet of water had to be driven through, for the ice had broken away from the banks and was already drifting out to sea !

Next morning, when they looked out of their windows, not a vestige of ice was to be seen. Only a wide expanse of water, which would have been without doubt their grave, had it not been for that wonderful horse. It is pleasing to know that the later days of this friend of the family were spent in happy and honourable retirement at the country home of one of the party.

But to return to the little family on their travels. Nothing very untoward seems to have occurred ; the only incident of any note being when James, a troublesome and fidgety boy of about six or seven, managed to slip, bag and all, unnoticed by the servants (who were probably dozing) out of the sledge.

His career would very speedily have been brought to an untimely end by cold, wolves, or bears (exemplifying the old adage of what once happened to poor "Don't Care !"), had not the string of the bag caught on a projectile and dragged the boy some distance in the snow. Until, indeed, a couple of peasants tramping along the road saw the strange looking bundle bumping behind the sledge and managed to attract the attention of the moujik. The sledges were then stopped and the lost property retrieved.

The monotony of the journey was broken at Moscow, where my uncle remembers being shown the great bell, which had fallen from the belfry of the Cathedral and smashed a hole the size of

a door in its side. Why it fell appears to have been a mystery, although one supposition is that the belfry built for its reception was made too small to allow for the swinging of the bell when rung. So the architect cut the rope to hide his fault, after which the size of the belfry was of no further importance.

They were also taken to gaze on an immense gun called "The Tsar Gun," though why so called seemed equally wrapped in mystery, unless because it was a "Big Gun." The children were much impressed, though nowadays it would have seemed a very small affair.

St. Petersburg appears to have been a city of wonder and delight; of marvellous toys, probably of French production, presented by affectionate relatives; of drives in sledges drawn by reindeer on the great frozen Neva, on which bonfires would be lighted; of gaiety and laughter, and all sorts of pleasures unknown to these children from far-away "Little Russia." The ice-hills also seemed to have made a great impression on his mind. One of their relatives was very skilful with his sleigh on the "hills," and being moreover a strikingly handsome man, was much in request by ladies as an escort; for all through the long winters these ice-hills, like the modern "winter sports," afforded the chief form of amusement. One Russian lady of high rank and great beauty, of which she was more

than aware, had long angled in vain for this pleasure. The invitation not being forthcoming, and unaccustomed to being slighted in this manner, she accosted him one day in late winter, as he stood watching the tobogganing, and suggested his taking her down. Now he had noticed that, owing to a sudden thaw, part of the run was not quite in the condition it should have been and was therefore unsafe. This he explained, excusing himself from the pleasure. The lady took it in bad spirit, as though he had intended a slight to herself, and suggesting he was a coward, said she would get Captain X., a dashing young Guardsman and somewhat of a celebrity on the hills, to take her instead. Captain X. was delighted, and they took off in grand style ; but on reaching the patch of thaw the sledge suddenly turned turtle and pitched out its pilot and his companion. Her nose was broken and her beauty spoilt for ever.

Then came the time for the little party to say good-bye to this city of delight. Sadly they bade adieu to their kind relatives and started on their homeward journey. This time they travelled in "Vassocks," a vehicle which could become a sledge or carriage at pleasure by the adjustment of wheels or runners ; for, although they started amid snow and ice, heavy thaws were to be expected as they travelled south, and bad roads would have to be negotiated.

Once again in Taganrog, the children invented a game they called "Watching for Kings," honours being scored by the one who first saw a gentleman wearing a cocked hat (on the same principle as that most intellectual of modern games, "Beaver"). The "Kings" idea evidently had its origin in the fact that when their father or other officials donned their uniforms and cocked hats they represented the Majesties of their respective countries; the inference being that cocked hats must have been worn a good deal more than they are nowadays, and officials did not dart into mufti on every conceivable opportunity.

But apropos of hats, my grandfather cherished a very happy memory of the Tsar Alexander I, by reason of that very cocked hat. For one winter, when the Emperor visited Taganrog, my grandfather in company with other officials waited upon his arrival, standing bareheaded in the snow and bitter frost. Stopping to speak to him, the Tsar told him to replace his hat, as he had much to say to him, and, being an Englishman, he might catch cold. He must have been the only man ever permitted the privilege, for the Imperial retinue were most horrified and indignant at what they imagined from a distance to have been a terrible breach of etiquette. Eventually my grandfather, with quiet satisfaction, explained it to have been a Royal order.

This conversation was followed up by others, for in the summer the Tsar would invite him to the little palace he occupied when in Taganrog, where they would sit in the gardens and play long games of chess interspersed with conversation. Here my grandfather learned to know and admire, beneath the cloak of the sovereign, the Man whose great desire was the welfare of his country. For the Emperor would amongst other things discuss with him his heart's project, which was the making of Taganrog into the Capital of Russia, whose other ports were well-nigh useless from being ice-bound for a greater part of the year. This project, however, never crystallized, for the Emperor died shortly after, in that very town, where he had just returned from a visit to the Caucasus. Some attributed his death to foul play, for there were many who disapproved of his progressive policy. But it was not improbably due to fever, contracted in the hills, where there is a good deal of malaria. In any case he was a great loss to his country.

The family remained at Taganrog till the year 1842, when my grandfather, who was a great believer in travel as a medium for education, determined to take his children on a visit to Italy, where his brother Henry and his wife were residing. So once again the family started on their travels, but this time they travelled by sea, setting sail for Malta in the "Superbo," a fine

sailing barque. Little did their father guess that he was taking his last farewell of his adopted country. Stopping at Kertch, they dined with the British Consul, who took them for a drive in the country to see some tumuli, which had been left by the Greeks when Kertch had been a Greek colony.

My uncle was only a little over six years old, and yet he remembered them perfectly. He also described to me the wondrous beauty of the Bosphorus with its rocky islets rising from a marvellously blue sea ; its wooded slopes and exquisite colouring. The difference from the country he had been accustomed to, with its windswept desolate steppes, probably helped to imprint the memory upon his mind, but it was without doubt the stirrings of the artist soul within him that made him admire and remember, even at so young an age.

The glittering beauty of Constantinople, as they anchored off the Golden Horn, impressed itself indelibly on the boy's mind ; and the whole party were eager to go on shore and explore its wonders. But the crystal and gold Paradise—as it then seemed—was but the exterior of a sepulchre : plague raged within, and they were told that if they set foot on its contaminated soil they must forego landing at Malta. So reluctantly they sailed away, only to be told on reaching Malta that they must all go through

quarantine because they had dropped anchor in an infected port. The quarantine was passed on a sun-baked island rock, on which their chief occupation was spearing fish, a pastime taught them by the Captain of the "Superbo."

When their isolation period was over, they took up quarters in the town. Accompanied by the friendly Captain they explored the island thoroughly. My grandfather's belief in travel as an education was so great that even the little five-year-old John was taken to inspect churches and public buildings. In one of the churches John suddenly burst into tears, and it was discovered that he was bleeding from a wound in his head. Without a word the Captain darted round a pillar and produced a struggling urchin, who confessed to having thrown a stone at the little Signor. My grandmother's intervention alone prevented him from being handed over to the police, when it would have gone badly with him ; for wealthy travellers, rare in those days, had to be protected. The children delighted in the steep roads and rocks and were particularly intrigued with the house of a friend, whose second floor in front was the ground floor of the back. His house having been built against the rocky sides of the island, one had to walk upstairs to reach the back door.

Then came my uncle's first steamboat voyage —from Malta to Naples. They stayed some

time at Naples, as usual seeing all there was of interest, and then on to the beautiful town of Castellmarie, where they remained several weeks. During their stay they visited Vesuvius, where they nearly lost brother Alfred, who, always of an enquiring mind, almost slipped into the crater in the course of his investigations.

On their return to Naples my uncle remembers a big review of some forty thousand soldiers, of whom the greater number were paid mercenaries from Switzerland, introduced into the country because the military authorities could not trust their own people. From Naples they drove to Rome, where my uncle, having reached the mature age of seven, was permitted with his elder brother James, aged eight, to explore the wondrous city alone. In this way they saw much, and proved the proverb regarding the angelic care of children, fools, and drunkards. From Rome, they proceeded by carriage through a country infested with brigands to visit connections, a Signor Micali and his family at Leghorn ; and then on again to Uncle Henry's house in Florence, where they were most hospitably entertained by Aunt Adèle, *née* Bastogi, a kind-hearted and vivacious lady, who was devoted to her Yeames relations.

From Florence, carriages were again requisitioned to take the family to Venice, via Padua, which was the first train journey my uncle had ever undertaken. At the station, two anxious

ladies accosted my grandfather, asking permission to join the party and travel under his protection, as they had never been in a train before and were feeling very nervous. My grandfather kindly consented to accept the responsibility, and the journey, a serious matter of about eleven miles, was accomplished in safety.

In Venice my uncle and his brothers learned the gentle art of swimming. The lessons took place in the military bath, which was merely a railed-in portion of the Grand Canal. The procedure was simple enough: the swimming master, a huge Austrian soldier, picked each boy up in turn and threw him into the water out of his depth. After a few moments of struggling, he would haul him back half drowned, only to throw him in again. The process would be repeated until, from sheer self-protection, the wretched youngster *did* learn to swim! Spartan, certainly; but the results were good, since all the family became excellent swimmers.

In 1843 a terrible sorrow befell the little family: a few weeks before the birth of his youngest daughter, Mary, the father contracted typhoid fever and died. His remains were conveyed by gondola to the beautiful island cemetery on the Lido.

Thus, alone in a foreign land, the plucky little widow sustained her two terrible trials; but, luckily for her, she had a devoted brother-in-law

in James Yeames, who immediately on hearing of her sad news, started with his wife, the kind Aunt Betsy, to the assistance of his brother's widow. Arrangements were then made for the whole family to return to Russia, travelling overland.

A young French Swiss of the name of Chappuis was engaged as tutor for the boys. His engagement practically lasted for the remainder of his life ; for when his services as a trainer of the youthful mind came to an end with the adolescence of his pupils, he entered the firm of Mitchell Yeames & Co., where he became one of its most valued clerks and, on retiring in his old age, lived within a few minutes' walk of my grandmother's house in London until he died.

Thus the family, reinforced by the new arrivals, left Venice for Trieste and thence travelled by diligence to Vienna, where three carriages were bought. There they embarked on a steamer going down the Danube to Presburg and Budapest, through Austrian territory to Turkey.

Once again a babe of only a few weeks old undertook an arduous journey ; but the route this time was far more trying in every way than the trip across Russia had been, for the roads were extremely bad and even dangerous. The inhabitants of this wild part of Europe were fierce and turbulent, and brigandage was considered a natural source of income. A glance at

a map of Europe will give some idea of what the journey was like, and Uncle James must have been a brave man to have undertaken the pilot-ship of this little band of travellers, for hotels were few and far between and posthouses wellnigh impossible. Often the party had to be content with their carriages for the night. Three vehicles full of people must have appeared rather an imposing spectacle, until indeed it transpired that out of the eleven passengers, exclusive of the servants, seven were children. Then no doubt the brigands came to the conclusion that a nursery was not worth robbing, which was the only reason I can imagine why they were not attacked. They travelled part of the way by river, which was swift and difficult of navigation, with occasional rapids at which they had to unload the carriages, bags and baggage, and pack them into large rowing boats in which to shoot the falls. My uncle and his brothers enjoyed this part immensely. They would then re-embark on the other side, and repack into another boat and so on till they came to the mouth of the Danube !

Of course all this part of the journey must have been intensely interesting. But my uncle could remember little beyond two incidents, one of which occurred on the frontier, when all the boys had to stand in a row with their shirts turned up to bare their little backs, for a medical

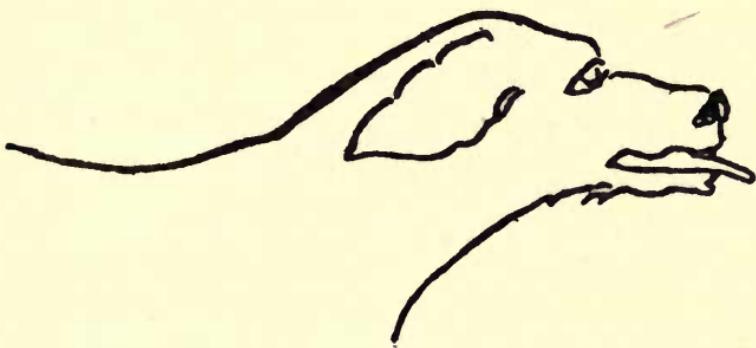
examination for plague, which always seemed to be raging in Turkey. The other was when the horses ran away in the middle of the night.

They were peacefully jolting along in their respective carriages, my grandmother with the little ones and girls in the first, M. Chappuis and the boys in the second, and Uncle James and Aunt Betsy in the third when for some unknown reason—probably a nefarious one—the Jewish drivers halted on a most dangerous part of the road sloping towards the river and, alighting from their perches, proceeded to hold a conference a little distance apart.

What plot they were hatching never transpired, as the horses, left to their own devices, suddenly took fright, and those in the shafts of the boys' carriage swerved off the road and bolted towards the river. The horses in front naturally took fright also, and set off up the road, awakening Uncle James with the sound of their galloping hoofs.

Springing out of his carriage, he beheld by the light of the moon, the carriage containing his nephews whirling towards the river, driverless and with terrified horses, whilst along the road before him, his sister-in-law's conveyance was disappearing from view. While he gazed, he suddenly saw the horses of his own carriage whisk round and start galloping wildly back along the road they had come, bearing away his wife !

He turned furiously on the drivers standing helplessly beside him, and so terrified were they by his rage that the next minute they also had bolted, leaving him alone in despair as to which direction to follow. History does not relate how the runaways were eventually captured, but captured they were and, curious to relate, very



*Bill Yearnies
1844*

HIS FIRST SKETCH

little the worse for their adventure. But once safely collected, Uncle James solemnly thrashed each of the drivers in turn. After which the journey continued peacefully and with no more incidents.

The winter was spent in Odessa at Uncle James's; and it was there that the momentous question of my uncle's future career was decided. His father, who had been passionately fond of pictures and taken a keen interest in Art, had

always hoped one of his sons would become a painter; but it was a small drawing of a dog that settled the matter, for, on seeing it, Aunt Betsy immediately exclaimed: "That settles it. Bill must be an artist." And so an artist he became, although not as one would have been led perhaps to think, an animal painter!

The education of the children had now to begin in earnest, and to this end my intrepid little grandmother decided to take her family to Dresden, where there were opportunities of a good education, and they could add German to their knowledge of English, French, Russian, and Italian.

The two travelling carriages were therefore once again requisitioned, and in the spring the family started on their travels, this time to cross Europe; but without kind Uncle James and Aunt Betsy, whom duty kept, till the outbreak of the Crimean War, at Odessa.

Of all they saw on this journey, the great salt mines of Wallachia seemed to have most impressed the boy. He remembered vividly the descent by means of a long wooden staircase to an underground world below, in which its inhabitants not only worked but actually lived. They were shown a chapel with its altar and images of saints carved out of the solid salt. There was also a subterranean lake on which the party were rowed in a boat. They carried

torches in their hands whose flares lit up the crystalline formation of walls and cavern roof and flashed rippling streams of fire over the dark water ; a scene calculated to impress itself on the mind of the young impressionable boy.

They broke their journey at Warsaw, where my uncle had an unpleasant experience. He and his brother were walking with their tutor one day, when they saw a crowd assembled on a piece of raised ground overlooking a barrack yard and, expecting to see something of interest, the boys joined it. What they did see sent them away disgusted : a soldier bared to the waist was being marched between two rows of his brother soldiers, armed with whips with which each made a cut at the victim as he passed : a terrible method of punishment.

Dresden now became their home for the next four years, and here my uncle's artistic education commenced in real earnest. He began his studies under an artist named Niemann, with whom he used to paint in oils ; but Niemann inherited some money and left Dresden for Italy, so my uncle continued with a certain Herr Franken, under whose guidance he painted a very charming portrait of himself.

He also appears to have learnt a good deal from the Court painter, the happy possessor of the beautiful name of Vogel von Vogelstein, who painted portraits of his brother and sister,

Henry and Louisa, and who good-naturedly suggested his painting the portrait of his mother at the same time, and as he helped him with suggestions and hints, they were lessons in themselves.

The four years spent in Dresden, from 1844 to 1848, appear to have been very pleasant ones ; for it was the old Germany, kind, homely, hospitable. They had a pleasant house with a big garden by the river, and as my grandmother was a woman of means, she was known as the wealthy "Hochwohlgeborene ;" the elder boys were the "Herr Barons ;" and the little ones the "kleine Herr Barons." One would not be surprised if the holders of many similar titles had not acquired them in an equally simple manner—and stuck to them !

They made a large circle of acquaintances, but my uncle's chief friend was a boy named Etlinger, whom they had known previously as he was the son of the German Consul in Odessa. Like the Yeameses he had travelled with his brother and a tutor across Europe to Dresden, in search of education. Since they had no home to go to for the holidays, they always spent theirs with my grandmother. Etlinger eventually became an engineer of some note in England.

This long and risky journey sounds exceedingly Spartan, but, as a matter of fact, the children of the Russian middle and better classes,

who live in outlying districts, think nothing of a fortnight's travel several times a year, to reach school. An English boy named Anderson was another friend for whom my uncle had an immense admiration, I think chiefly on account of the dare-devil tricks he would play on everyone.

His particular *bête noire* was the Headmaster of the Polytechnic, a pompous and purse-proud individual, very tenacious of his position, and living in an ostentatious style well guaranteed to tickle the sense of humour of an English boy.

His wife, rather like himself, and holding the same views on their own importance, would drive out every day in great style in a carriage of which they were inordinately proud. One day, however, as the Headmaster's wife was waiting in full war-paint for the chariot to arrive to take her for her daily triumphal progress through the town, the coachman appeared in great consternation to say the equipage had been stolen. How it had been done he could not imagine; as the coach-house doors were locked and he had the key . . . "Impossible," said the master and, fuming with rage, went to look for himself. True enough, there was no carriage in the coach-house, but what was more extraordinary still, the doors were bolted and barred *inside*!

The police were called in, and like the monks in the *Jackdaw of Rheims* they "examined the

floor, the walls, and the ceiling." Meanwhile the curious points in the matter were that there were no wheelmarks to be seen, no sound of a carriage driving away had been heard in the night, and the horses stood in their stalls, guiltless of any trace of midnight travel. To use a Mark Twainism, "the matter was wropped in mystery."

Suddenly someone glanced up at the front of the coach-house and espied something very like a carriage pole protruding from the hay-loft window. This was pointed out, but pooh-poohed. Impossible ! The pole of the carriage belonging to that Auxiliary Omnipotent, the Headmaster of the Polytechnic, would naturally have gone with the carriage. And such a beautiful carriage too ! However, some inquisitive person went up the steep wooden stairs, and shouted out in wild excitement that the carriage WAS up there. Up those narrow steps ! It was inconceivable ! The Headmaster laboriously heaved his fat body up the ladder, and there before his astonished eyes stood his cherished carriage, blocking up every corner of the loft, but absolutely intact.

The English boys, led by Anderson, had taken the whole thing to pieces during the night, carried it up the ladder and re-erected it !

Another boy friend, who in the course of time became a distinguished English Admiral, was the son of one of Wellington's officers in the Spanish campaign, a General Browne, who had



MRS. WILLIAM YEAMES, MOTHER OF WILLIAM FREDERICK YEAMES, R.A.

retired to Dresden and married a German lady. Their son determined to serve under his father's flag, and with the help of the Yeames family (for every member apparently assisted to "cram" him) he attempted to pass the necessary exams. Perhaps it was a case of the old adage of too many cooks spoiling the broth ; anyway he was ploughed ! However, he was given another chance, and being this time coached only by my uncle's eldest sister, he passed triumphantly. Within a few years he had taken part in ten or eleven engagements, including the Chinese war, and had been present at the taking both of Peking and the Taku forts. He died a bachelor, and beneath his pillow was found a scarf which had been made for him in his youth by the lady who had passed him into the Navy. Sentimental readers may draw their own conclusions !

Amongst the English contingent settled in Dresden was a certain Major Munro, celebrated for being the last man to fight a duel in England. In consequence he was looked upon by the children with great respect, although it would have been impossible to meet a more inoffensive looking little man.

This case was a curious one, for Major Munro's opponent was his own brother-in-law and incidentally his Colonel, a man with a diabolical temper. Munro was a married man, and for family reasons had stood a good deal for some

time. At last the Colonel came into the mess late one night and accused Munro of cheating. Munro thereupon lost his temper and boxed his Colonel's ears. A duel ensued, in which the Major shot his man, and escaped the country. The matter was much discussed, but the provocation was suspected to be greater than was generally known, and eventually the Major was not only pardoned, but permitted to rejoin his regiment in spite of the fact that he had killed the late Colonel !

RECOLLECTION III

The lost fortune—1845, a year of European unrest—They leave Dresden—Travel via Ghent and Ostend—Settle in London—Education of the boys—Visit sights—Brother James climbs the cross of St. Paul's—Sir George Scharf—Louis Philippe—Louis Napoleon's eagle—Family depart for Florence—Italian society—The Demidoffs—Scullion opera singer—Makes the acquaintance of Mario—Rossini entertains the Tsar of Russia—The Comtessa Guiccioli—Mrs. Mary Somerville—Italian politics—The Cavaliere D'Azelio—Gladstone's advice to Bastogi on income-tax—The Duke of Tuscany—Victor Emanuel steals Bastogi's travelling rug—Bastogi steals it back—The Count and Countess Beltrani—The Donnanbergs—Lady Walpole smokes a cigar—The Tombs of the Medicis.

ABOUT this time the Yeames family lost a fortune. The matter began many years before, but a letter received by my grandmother about this time marked the climax, and made her decide to leave immediately for England.

My grandmother's father, John Henley, had a sister who married a certain Mr. Ffinch, who conceived a great scheme for draining a portion of the Norfolk fens and, I believe, part of the Wash itself. Being however short of money, he applied to my great-grandfather, who helped him with funds, with the result that Ffinch became a wealthy man. But remembering that

he owed his fortune to his brother-in-law, he made a will by which all his wealth should go to the Yeames family on the death of his widow. His wife entirely agreed with him in the matter, and a duplicate of the will was given to my grandmother with strict injunctions as to its safe keeping. It was deposited in a despatch box, of which the greatest care was taken, even to the point of keeping it in my grandmother's bedroom. But this very care was possibly its undoing ; for, being thus given the impression of intrinsic value, it was stolen.

However, as the original was known to be in the safe keeping of the widow herself, who was devoted to my grandmother, no one worried about the matter. Time passed ; then came the visit to Italy with its sad result, my grandfather's death, and about the same time they were astonished to hear that the widow Mrs. Ffinch had suddenly married again, this time a young military man.

As the bridegroom was a notorious spendthrift, it did not require much perspicuity to foretell the result of the match. He squandered as much of her money as he could lay his hands on and ill-treated her when he could get no more. Her letters to my grandmother were in the meantime becoming more and more pathetic, and eventually she implored her to come back to England. It was difficult for Mrs. Yeames to

leave Dresden exactly at the moment; but another piteous appeal determined her to put aside all other considerations and, together with her family, she set out for home.

Owing to the disturbed state of the country—all Europe seemed to be simmering on the point of Revolution—the journey took longer than might have been expected; and when the family at last arrived in England, they were met with the sad news that the poor lady had been burnt to death the very day before! No one could explain how the accident had occurred—nor could the will be found. The husband therefore came into the fortune, which in a few years he had entirely dissipated.

But to return to our travellers. In 1848 Europe was in a great state of ferment, the French Royal Family had just fled from France; there had been an insurrection in Berlin, where people were being shot in the streets; and fighting between factions was going on in Dresden. It was as though Europe lay over the thin crust of a great social and economic volcano, liable to eruption at any moment. They became apprised of this state of affairs as soon as they arrived at Ghent; for, as they were walking from the station to their hotel near by, they heard screams and shouts in the distance. The porters carrying their luggage suddenly lined up against the wall, motioning the rest of the party

to do the same. Luckily they did so, for the next moment a mob of people surged madly down the street, flying in all directions, pursued by cavalry with drawn swords. The first idea of the alarmed strangers was that the town was in insurrection, but they were told it was merely a "pacific" measure performed to prevent crowds forming in the streets and an intimation of what would happen, if there were any undue fuss!

On every side they heard of nothing but the famine-stricken state of the country. My uncle told me he could remember his horror at seeing children eating refuse which they found in the gutter, and kneeling to them for bread. Once when he happened to be in a provision shop, a little girl came in and offering a small coin for a piece of bread, asked the shopman if he would be so very kind as to cut it with the knife which he had just used for cutting the bacon, so as to give it a flavour!

This story ultimately came out in *Punch* ("Please cut it, Mister, with an 'ammy knife!"), but the original was really tragic. I imagine there was very little in the way of small change to be found in the Yeames boys' pockets by the time they left Ghent.

They embarked for England from Ostend, landed at Blackwall and drove to Euston *en route* for Derbyshire, where they were to stay with relatives. Later they settled in London,

and the boys attended classes in chemistry and natural philosophy at King's College. Of languages they knew their share, for all spoke French like Frenchmen, in addition to their German, Italian, and Russian.

In off-hours, accompanied by their tutor, they explored London. The City, the Tower, the Docks, Westminster Abbey, and St. Paul's, they visited them all. This last visit was the cause of a few moments of intense anxiety to M. Chappuis. The cross on the dome was being cleaned or regilded, and the workmen had gone for their dinner, leaving the ladders unprotected. M. Chappuis was busy pointing out the places of interest to his young charges on one side of the gallery, when he heard a shout of triumph from above his head. Raising his eyes from the roofs below to the skies above, he beheld to his horror, standing on the very top of the unprotected cross (the highest pinnacle in London) that pickle of the family—James!

His feelings can well be imagined, but he kept them in check, until by honied words he had decoyed the adventurer down to the safety of the railled-in enclosure. History kindly draws a veil over what followed.

At this time my uncle's real artistic training under George Scharf (afterwards Sir George Scharf), began. He had only three pupils, Lockyer, Philip Hermogénes Calderon and my uncle.

Of these three, two, to his great pride, became Royal Academicians. Lockyer died in India.

Scharf was a very learned man, especially in anatomy. He also taught my uncle the rudiments of composition.

My uncle always thought he ought to have stayed longer with Scharf; but his mother, with her fine sense (to put it kindly) of always knowing best, was annoyed because my uncle did not pass into the Academy schools immediately and handed him over to F. S. Westmacott, with whom he worked for some time.

The fateful years of '48 and '49 brought many foreign refugees to the hospitable shores of Great Britain. My uncle, while staying at St. Leonard's, remembers seeing a lonely little boy picking daisies on the grass by the sea, attended by an immense flunkey with enormous and fierce mustachios. Being attracted by the little chap, he enquired of the servant who he was, and was answered with great hauteur and in a most impressive manner: "Monsieur, c'est le Duc de Chartres."

And when the sun shone, passers by could see a tired and broken old man being wheeled along the front in an invalid chair. It was Louis Philippe of France.

Occasionally the chair would be brought to a halt, and the ex-King would gaze across the water in the direction of his lost kingdom.

But his days were at least peaceful, although the sun of Royalty had set. His means, too, were far from straitened. Having learnt the lesson of poverty in his younger days in Geneva, when as a refugee he had taught mathematics for his daily bread and mended his own shoes; he had taken care to save when the days of affluence arrived and had brought up his family with a proper respect for economy. In fact, the parsimonious habits of the Bourbons had been a source of much complaint at the French Court.

Amongst other refugee royalties, less reputable in their exile than Louis Philippe, was Louis Napoleon. My uncle remembers him as living in a small house in a mean street in London, where he kept in his area (much to the amusement of the errand boys) a large eagle, which he fed on raw meat.

It was not however as a pet that the bird was kept, but rather for stern business. For it was destined to play its rôle as the Symbol of France itself, to be, in fact, the dramatic touch to a plot which was in the process of being hatched in the shabby house above the area. When all was ready Louis Napoleon and a few followers landed on the French coast. The psychological moment having arrived, the Royal bird was unleashed, to soar imperially over regenerate France; but, being an area bred, or rather "fed" bird of prey, he rose in a somewhat uncertain manner in the

air, blinked his eye foolishly at the sun and then, suddenly perceiving the welcome sight of some raw meat lying on the counter of a butcher's shop, swooped down and buried his talons in the succulent morsel. This magnificent *coup d'état* landed the prospective sovereign in the fortress of Ham, from which, however, he managed to escape disguised in the clothes of a workman of the name of "Badinguet." He shed the clothes, but never this name, which ridicule forced him to bear through life. In fact, there were some who affirmed that the subsequent Emperor of the French was the workman himself and not Louis Napoleon at all! After the wheel of fortune had turned, however, he proudly visited England for the opening of the Exhibition of 1855, not as Badinguet, but as Napoleon III of France—the honoured guest of Europe's greatest Sovereign, Queen Victoria.

But I digress and must return to my family. The next year, 1852, saw the Yeameses depart again for Florence with the exception of the eldest son, Henry, who had been sent to Taganrog to be initiated into the firm of William Yeames.

The chief purpose of this move was to continue the education of my uncle. To this end, my grandmother rented a palazza near her brother-in-law's, and a studio for my uncle, who began to work under Professor Polastrini and Raphael

Buonajuto, studying the methods of the old masters and Angelico di Fiesoli in particular.

The following winter was spent at Rome. The family then returned in the spring to England, leaving my uncle in Florence to the care of his uncle and aunt, who had a great affection for him. They allotted him a pretty room on the ground floor of the palazzo, overlooking the garden, and into which he had access by day or night through the good offices of the butler who also lived on the ground floor. This arrangement suited him very well, as he was thus enabled to go to student parties and such-like joyous bachelor entertainments which were unattended by his relatives.

Not that Aunt Adèle, who was very fond of society, did not do her fair share of entertaining. Indeed, my uncle met many interesting people, both British and Continental, at her salons. In those days everyone, rich or poor, high or low, seemed to entertain in Florence; and, as a rule, the higher the social scale, the poorer (although none the less sought after) was the entertainment. As an illustration of this, my uncle used to mention one family, of the very oldest and proudest nobility, who would give immense receptions at their palazzo, a wonderful old place, albeit somewhat dilapidated and moth-eaten; an invitation to which was the hall-mark of Italian society. But the only refreshments

served were tumblers of cold water, and slices of water melon (the cheapest fruit in Italy), which were handed round on great silver salvers, with much dignity by liveried footmen at the end of the evening.

Curiously enough, this does not sound so out of place in Italy, but it would take a stretch of imagination to picture a belted earl of Great Britain entertaining with apples and water from the scullery tap ! Yet this family had a pedigree whose perspective simply went out of sight. Perhaps that explains it.

Very different from this form of entertainment were the receptions of ultra magnificence, given by the Demidoffs in their palace just outside Florence. And just as different was Demidoff himself ; for he was the grandson of a Russian peasant, a liberated serf, who had bought land in Siberia on which gold had been found.

Thus Demidoff was immensely rich ; and when the Duke of Tuscany conferred on him the title of Prince, he blossomed out into almost regal state, supporting a bodyguard of his own, dressed in a specially designed uniform, so that sentinels of his own corps saluted him at his gate.

He married Matilda, daughter of Jerome Bonaparte and a German princess who was closely allied to the Tsar Nicholas. The Emperor detested the match because of Demidoff's obscure birth, and did all in his power to bring

about a divorce. In fact he was eventually successful in doing so.

When he visited the Princess in her Russian home, he would refuse to receive Demidoff *en famille*; so the unfortunate husband had to wait outside the reception-room, whilst the Royal visit was in progress. How the actual divorce was engineered my uncle could not say, but before the decree was given, Matilda happened to meet at a ball the lady on whose account the proceedings had ostensibly been taken. This person had the effrontery to say with a toss of her head, as she passed Matilda: “*Femme d'un esclave !*”

The Princess coloured, staggered by the insult, but recovering her presence of mind, replied quickly: “*Mieux sa femme, que sa maitresse !*” She died at the age of eighty-four, and the ex-Empress Eugénie of France, her most faithful friend, watched over her deathbed.

At this time Italy was a world in itself of art, music, and letters. Grand opera was at its zenith, and its exponents were almost without exception trained in that country. In fact, only Italian masters could teach singing in those days, and no one ventured on the stage under an English name.

Everyone sang snatches of grand opera. No sooner was a new score put on the boards than all Italy was singing it. In fact, so quickly would

tunes be “broadcast” by the receptive Italian, that the music of *La Donna è Mobile* was only given to the tenor who was to sing the air an hour or two before he was due to appear on the stage, for fear someone should overhear it and make it public property before its legitimate performance. As it was, the whole city was singing it within a few hours; for, as I have mentioned, everyone sang: even Aunt Adèle’s cook could be heard warbling passionate love songs in the kitchen, as he banged the meat to make it tender. Whilst a certain Contessa, a friend of my aunt’s, with a passion for lionizing new singers and actors, found herself one evening entertaining at a dinner of which he was the “lion,” a *ci-devant* scullion of hers, who had left her service and, unbeknown to her, had suddenly developed into a great opera singer. No doubt he had practised over the tough beef, like his compatriot at Aunt Adèle’s.

Italians seem to have a natural aptitude for singing; though not all the great singers emerged from the back premises. The great Mario, whom my uncle met several times, was of course of noble birth. Extremely handsome, with a fine presence, strong dramatic instincts, and an exquisite voice, he was the hero of the day.

He was a man of some wealth, and had been in the Italian army. But having struck a superior officer, he found it necessary to fly the



WILLIAM FREDERICK YEAMES, AS A BOY.
Painted by Himself.

country. He then travelled about Europe, gaily dissipating his fortune. Having finally arrived in St. Petersburg, he announced at a magnificent banquet at which every lady received a present of jewels, that this would have to be his farewell entertainment, as he had come to the end of his resources and would now have to set about earning his own living. He then went to Paris with an introduction to a lady of wealth who had a flair for discovering and launching geniuses on the world. She asked him in what compass he could sing to her. He replied in whichever she preferred—tenor, baritone, or bass ; it made no difference to him. Eventually he sang in all three ; and in a few months the whole of Europe was ringing with his fame.

The only country, my uncle told me, in which he was never heard was his native land. Furious at the idea of a scion of his noble house singing for hire on the stage, his father made him promise never to sing in Italy. This promise he faithfully kept, even refusing, it is said, to sing in private before his own children when in Italy.

He married Madame Grisi, the great soprano, and had three children, of whom my uncle used to tell an amusing story : Some great lady, I think it was Queen Victoria, on meeting Madame Grisi one day with her three little girls, said playfully: “And these, I suppose, are the little ‘Grisettes ? ’ ”

“No, Madam,” replied Grisi. “They are the little Marionettes !”

Rossini was another interesting man whose acquaintance my uncle made. He often met the composer at the house of a mutual friend, Solomon de Rothschild, himself a young man, son of the Paris banker with whom Bastogi was very friendly. The Rothschilds were largely interested in the construction of the original Italian railways, of which of course Count Bastogi had to do much of the financial work.

Having plenty of money and time to spare, Solomon liked to consider himself a patron of the fine arts, baiting his hook with extremely good dinners, which Rossini, a great *bon vivant*, never could refuse.

He was a red-faced, clean-shaven man, remarkable for his wit as well as for his music. Until his marriage to a lady of questionable antecedents, though much wealth—and next to food, Rossini loved nothing so much as money—he was immensely popular. But with the advent of Verdi, there came a turn in the public taste in music, and Rossini’s later years found him soured and dyspeptic. When Solomon de Rothschild urged him to return to Paris, he refused with melancholy bitterness, saying : “What is the good ? I have lost my teeth, and cannot enjoy the food, and my music is not listened to now. It is all Verdi.” However, he seems to have

eventually altered his mind, as he returned to Paris, where he died.

The Tsar Nicholas I was a great admirer of his music, and an excellent story was told by my uncle of their first meeting in Paris. The weather had been very warm, and Rossini, feeling the heat considerably whilst composing grand opera in his room, threw off his coat. Warming to his work—in more senses than one—he divested himself of his waistcoat. Then finally, as the Muse spurred him to still greater efforts, and his braces were tightening beneath the strain, he slipped them off also, and thus untrammelled, plunged with renewed vigour to his task of making melody.

So engrossed was he, that he did not hear heavy footsteps mounting the stairs, and great was his surprise and indignation when the door was suddenly flung open, and in walked a tall stranger, unannounced.

“ Rossini,” he said, “ I have just arrived in Paris, and my first visit is paid to you.”

It was the Tsar Nicholas of Russia.

Rossini sprang to his feet to make obeisance. But being “ unbraced,” his trousers slipped down, and the great composer found himself holding audience with the Emperor of all the Russians clad in his shirt!

At one of my aunt’s receptions, my uncle met the celebrated Comtessa Guicciolo, whom every-

one knew to have been Byron's mistress, although she continued to hold her position socially. She must have been between fifty and sixty years of age, but looked much younger and was still very handsome.

She was of rather large build, with lovely auburn hair and a dazzling complexion. Her ivory white bust and shoulders showed off to great advantage by reason of her very low-cut black velvet bodice. That she was inordinately vain of her blonde beauty was evident, for she told my uncle that she had just been to a party at which were a number of English and French ladies, and that she, the Italian, was the fairest of them all. She professed great interest in Art and artists and was extremely gracious to the good-looking young Englishman.

Another charming woman, although of a totally different type, who lived at Florence at that time, was Mrs. Mary Somerville, the celebrated mathematician and astrologer, a rather frail old lady, of whom her daughters were extremely proud. Though not rich, she gave delightful little receptions, at which many interesting people were to be met, and she herself was ready to talk on any subject. She was about eighty-eight when my uncle knew her, and at the age of ninety she published a book. She was a martyr to gout, and would amuse children by drawing on a slate with her chalky knuckles.

Politics had been, and were still, playing an important part in those days in Italy, which, as every student of history knows, was for many years undergoing a great social upheaval. The unification of Italy was the matter in hand, and men did wonders and suffered much for its consummation. One of the greatest workers for this cause was a certain Cavaliere D'Azelio, a Piedmontese of noble family, but bankrupt fortune. So poor was he that he could not afford to buy himself decent clothes, but would walk about in the cast-off raiment of his friends, which seldom fitted him as he was an unusually tall man, while the average Italian is of short stature.

He cared nothing for appearances. The unification of his beloved country under the King of Sardinia was the one and only idea he lived for. To this end he worked hard at enlisting the sympathies of the Bohemian world, in which he moved and laboured for his daily bread—literally *bread*, for often he could afford nothing else. He afterwards told the story of his life in a most interesting book entitled *Les Mie Rimembranza*.

His mode of life was very useful to his cause, as it enabled him to become a member of several formidable secret societies, numbers of which existed in Italy at that time, and in which he used his influence for the achievement of his ambition.

Eventually his schemes and hopes crystallized into shape. The numerous petty kingdoms and dukedoms were collected under the rule of the King of Sardinia, Victor Emanuel. Thus the down-at-heel, badly clothed artist, politician, and intriguer, became a Minister with Cavour and Bastogi as confrères. When he retired, the King promoted Cavour to his office.

Aunt Adèle's brother, Count Bastogi, became Minister of Finance and performed the herculean task of amalgamating and reorganizing the finances of the practically bankrupt states of Italy. He accomplished feats of high finance and daring policy, seldom equalled. Yet he was such a highly strung man and so physically timid that he could hardly sit still in a carriage for nervousness.

Writing to Gladstone for his advice as to the advisability of levying income-tax, he received the reply : "By all means. The scheme is good, but never let it become more than twopence in the pound."

Up-to-date comments on this advice are not only superfluous, but painful !

He had to work a great deal with the Duke of Tuscany, who was somewhat slow and heavy in comprehension. The scenes between them appear to have greatly amused the onlookers, for Bastogi, virile and impetuous, would almost go off his head with impatience at the other's obtuseness. In the end he would shout and

thump upon the table in his efforts to make the Duke follow his quick brain. For Bastogi cared little if he was dealing with King or Commoner, where his work was concerned, or, for that matter, anything else, as the following little story will show.

He was travelling across Italy in winter, when the King boarded his train and, hearing that Bastogi was also in it, insisted on entering his compartment. In a few minutes they were plunged in a conversation which carried them far into the evening. Eventually the King felt sleepy and drew a travelling rug which was lying between them, and which was incidentally Bastogi's property, over his knees and relapsed into slumber. Bastogi looked lugubriously at his King, comfortably wrapped up in his rug, and then attempted sleep himself. But the cold made this well-nigh impossible. Again he looked longingly at his lost property, and arguing that though the King could easily have procured his own rug, he could not have procured the King's, he began gently to pull the article in question off the King's knees and wrap it round his own. The warmth thus acquired soon produced sleep, and in a few minutes Bastogi was slumbering as soundly as the King.

Presently, shivering with cold, the King awoke. Looking round for the rug, he beheld his Minister sleeping calmly and peacefully within its folds.

Taking his lesson like a gentleman, the King noiselessly rose; and went off to his own saloon.

Another great adherent and fighter, but one who lost his all for the cause, was a brother-in-law of Bastogi's, Count Beltrani, who had married one of Aunt Adèle's sisters. He was a handsome man with charming manners, and a nature totally devoid of fear. During the war with Austria, at a most crucial moment, he preserved the "morale" of his troops by calmly riding his great white charger in front of the earth-works in which his men were entrenched.

The Countess, his wife, a delicate and fragile woman of great beauty and vivacity, seemed to share his bravery. To reach her husband during the war she walked half way across Italy, disguised as a peasant, and actually passed through the enemy's lines. She faithfully shared his joys and sorrows, his wealth and poverty, his home and even his banishment; for owing to his advanced opinions and objection to Papal rule, he was exiled from his own country. The difficulty was to collect the monies accruing from his estate—monies badly needed. So once a year the couple would drive to the frontier together, and whilst the Count waited at an obscure little inn, the Countess, dressed as a contadina carrying a country basket on her head, would cross over the frontier, visit their property, secretly collect what was owing to them and then

return to her husband through the disturbed country, infested as it was with brigands. No one else could have got the money, as the Italians distrusted everyone and would have refused to give it up to anyone else.

Eventually, even that source of revenue came to an end, as the Papal authorities confiscated his property.

His active brain planned various money-making schemes, such as growing rice at the mouth of the Po; and felling timber in Sardinia. But they all came to nothing, owing no doubt to the usual cause, want of capital, of which there was very little in Italy at that time. Eventually this very gallant gentleman died in penury.

Uncle Henry's house in Florence was a great resort for the English who visited Italy in those days, and my uncle met a great many interesting people of his own nationality as well as compatriots of his aunt. He remembered Lady Walpole as a great smoker, whom he surprised with Madame Donnanberg, the wife of General Donnanberg, who commanded the Russian Army at the battle of Inkermann, comfortably seated in the smoking-room, each with a big cigar in her mouth ! This looks as if their grandmothers could have given even our cigarette-smoking young women a lead.

He studied a great deal in the galleries of the city and made many copies of the old masters

under various teachers. One of his masters, a Signor Polastrini, seeing how engrossed he was in the copying of the portrait of a beautiful lady with glorious red gold hair, told him she was one of the Medici family and was buried in the great family vault, of which he held the post of Curator ; his duties being to periodically inspect the tombs, where the members of that proud and ancient family lay buried and embalmed.

He described to my uncle his first visit, which he said he could never forget. With lamps in their hands, he was led down stone stairs past heavily locked doors to these silent chambers of the dead, where ranged round the mausoleum were rows of coffins, some only containing bones and dust ; but others, with glass tops, revealed marvellously embalmed human forms, in the clothes and jewels of their day, and all in varying, but wonderful states of preservation. As he walked round, he suddenly gave a start of astonishment, for there before him as though asleep in her case of glass and in all the pride of youth and beauty, with her glorious red gold hair rippling almost to her feet, lay the lady of the portrait.

So marvellously had the embalmers done their work that he could hardly believe that she was not really breathing.

Amongst my uncle's papers I chanced upon the following little anecdote jotted down in his own

handwriting, a rather unusual thing for him to do, so I imagine he must have thought it worth remembering :

.... "An English lady with red hair and bright complexion, whom I met and conversed with in my uncle's house in Florence, had at one time been married to a French gentleman at the Court of the great Napoleon. The latter liked conversing with her and did so frequently ; asking many questions about England, but at the end of each conversation always finished his talk with these words :

'Va, petite Angleterre, je te hais.' "

RECOLLECTION IV

My uncle's departure for Rome—The unsmiling Monsignor—Execution of Burke, the Body-snatcher—German justice—Highwaymen—Cruickshank's escape from footpads—Story of Valabrégue—Mrs. Loudoun—The Bishop and the breeches—Student merrymaking on the Campagna—My uncle wins a sack race—King Leopold of Bavaria—Picture dealing in Italy—A Michael Angelo is smuggled into England—The Mahogany Panel—Monsignor Pennini invents a flying machine.

LIKE all other good things in this world, the days of my uncle's sojourn in Florence now came to an end. A decision from home to the effect that he was to proceed to Rome and to continue his studies there, had arrived, so having said farewell to his many Florentine friends, he betook himself with eighty pounds in his pocket, to the Eternal City. Here he hired a room with a fine studio in the house of a Perugian artist, and prepared to study Roman art.

Some of his studies are extremely beautiful, especially his landscapes, which show extraordinary accuracy and painstaking work. He also worked a great deal from the old Masters and received special permission to copy Raphael's frescoes in the Vatican from a certain English

Monsignor, by name of Hamilton, a tall, cold, unsmiling man, with the profile of a Napoleon.

His fellow students, however, had a joke to the effect that the only thing he ever learnt in Rome was billiards at the English club. He certainly made a lot of friends and had a very pleasant time—until the eighty pounds were gone. Then he had to make a little money on his own, which he did by drawing portraits in crayon at a sovereign a head. He drew a number of the club members, including a portrait of Spencer Stanhope and his brother for their mother. Another commission for a portrait was given him by an interesting and highly cultivated individual named Valabrégue, who was a great authority on antique art. He was most excellent company, and his repertoire of good stories was endless, for he had mingled in the most elegant world of the day, having held the post of Chamberlain to Napoleon III. He had also travelled a great deal and related to my uncle how, during the trial of Burke and Hare (the body-snatchers) in Edinburgh, he had accepted an invitation to witness the execution of Burke (Hare having turned Queen's evidence). The hanging was to take place in some public spot, I forget whether it was the Tolbooth or not, but the crowd expected was so great that Valabrégue was invited to come overnight to the house, from the windows of which he was to view the ghastly sight.

Since none of the party felt like sleeping, the night was spent in cards and drinking. The execution took place in the early part of the morning. The prisoner arrived with the Chaplain in attendance, who invited him to kneel in prayer, prior to the rope being passed round his neck. Burke consented, but before doing so, deliberately produced a clean handkerchief from his pocket and, spreading it on the scaffold, knelt upon it to avoid soiling his clothes. A strange mentality that could pay attention to a useless detail at such a dread moment !

Burke had been a doctor of some repute and had even lectured at the Edinburgh hospitals ; but he fell into evil courses and finished on the scaffold. The case created a great sensation at the time, the question being whether the subjects he procured for dissection had died natural deaths or had been murdered.

Saving his own life by his evidence, Hare, his fellow criminal, fled the country and, under an assumed name, got work in a lime factory, I believe in Australia. His fellow labourers, however, on discovering that he was "Hare the Resurrectionist," threw him into a lime pit. He managed to crawl out, sightless though still living, and made his way back to England. My uncle remembered having him pointed out, a blind beggar with a little dog, in Oxford Street.

That curious and repulsive desire to see a



FREDERICK WALKER, A.R.A.
From a photograph by David Wynfield.

fellow being deprived of his life is inexplicable ; but that it was possessed by many at that time (probably owing to the dearth of other amusements) and, pandered to, is evident. My uncle told me he had himself seen the space in front of the Old Bailey being cleared for an execution. Heavy posts were driven into the ground at intervals to prevent the crowd expected to attend from crushing each other in their efforts to view the pleasing spectacle. As it was, there were generally two or three people killed in the crush. Windows overlooking the scene were hired at enormous prices, and a little cake called "Resurrection Cake" was baked and sold especially for the occasion.

The prohibition of these terrible exhibitions took place not a moment too soon ; for it began gradually to dawn on the authorities that, instead of acting as a deterrent, these terrible exhibitions were only the source of all sorts of curious psychological results, sowing seeds which in some minds caused further crimes. A Dresden doctor told my grandmother how, one night, as he and a friend were riding over a lonely moor in the vicinity of the town, his horse suddenly shied at the forms of two girls asleep upon the ground. On being interrogated, they explained that they were passing the night there, as an execution was to take place on that spot next day, and they wished to have a good view. The

execution took place, followed by a second one ; for the doctor learnt a few days later that one of the girls had murdered the other. It appeared that the excitement of the whole affair, the drums, the bustle, and the ghastly importance of the chief actor (the criminal) had so affected her brain as to make her desire to fill a similar rôle herself—an inconceivable idea, unless one has studied the intricacies of the human mind. The German method of despatching the criminals in those days savoured of the mediæval, for they were decapitated by means of a long and very sharp sword, the back of which was hollowed to contain quicksilver, which ran into the larger space at the tip, and automatically gave weight and immense impetus as it swung down to sever the victim's head. The head was then held aloft by the headsman to show how well the work had been done. The post of executioner in Germany was generally hereditary, the son practising on cabbage heads till sufficiently proficient to relieve his father's hand when it became too weak.

Hanging was the British method, although the procedure was more primitive than it is now. Dick Turpin and Nevison were characters of the past, but highwaymen, or rather "footpads," were still to be feared, even on such frequented highways as Edgware Road ! Cruickshank, Dickens' great illustrator, had an exciting experience there. Whilst driving with his little grand-

son, for whom he had fortunately just bought a toy trumpet, two desperate-looking ruffians held up the coach. But they were so alarmed at what they took in the half dusk to be the business end of a blunderbuss, but which was only the child's trumpet sticking out of the window, that they decamped.

On the Continent the diligences and coaches often carried their own highwaymen. A lady told my uncle of an adventure she experienced when she and a friend were travelling with a third passenger, a charming young man. He suddenly produced a pistol in the middle of the journey and demanded their money and jewellery. Being totally at his mercy, they had to surrender their possessions, upon which this gentleman of the road, with many polite bows and wishes for a pleasant journey, left the carriage.

But to return to M. Valabrégue. He was the elder of two sons of an officer of the First Empire who had married Catalini, the famous singer.

Their mother was devoted to them, and on her death they received jointly her beautiful villa at Florence, filled with exquisite antique furniture, pictures, *objets d'art*, and with a beautiful garden containing a small chapel in which she herself had been buried.

The younger son, a Colonel in Louis Napoleon's Guard, and much favoured by the French

Emperor, kindly invited his elder brother to come to Paris, and share his fortunes. The brother accepted the invitation, but once at Court he quickly supplanted the soldier in the affections of his Sovereign. Colonel Valabrégue was therefore “given” a command at Tunis, that Ultima Thule of the discarded favourite of the Court of France; whilst his elder brother remained in Paris, where Louis Napoleon made him his Chamberlain, the duties of which, he told my uncle, consisted chiefly of attending to the arrangements of the Royal table.

But life at Court was expensive, and Valabrégue was soon badly in want of money. Without asking his brother’s permission (which he knew would be refused, as his brother adored his mother’s memory), he proceeded first to sell the contents of the villa and then the villa itself. He used the money to pay his debts, but continued to remit to his brother a yearly sum equivalent to the rent they were accustomed to divide, thus keeping him in ignorance of what he had done. Then, thinking to raise his fortunes further, he married a shrew, whom no one else had the courage to wed, in spite of her fortune; for she was the daughter of a wealthy Marquise. This marriage, however, proved his undoing, for his wife’s temper did not improve with time, and soon his life became a perfect burden to him. His only happiness lay in the companionship of

their one child, a little daughter on whom he doted. But even this proved a sorrow, for his wife became wildly jealous of the child, and used to ill-treat the little one with the sole idea of making him suffer. The climax however came when late one afternoon two gentlemen called to see him. Gracefully apologizing for their intrusion, they explained that they were travelling in Italy collecting antiques and pictures, and that, having heard what wonderful knowledge he possessed on such matters, they had ventured to call and ask his opinion on some of their late purchases.

As they appeared to be cultured, rich, and well-connected men, M. Valabrégue suspected nothing and, being particularly vain of his knowledge, was easily captured by their flattery. During the course of conversation they suggested that, as their carriage was at the door, he should drive with them to their residence just outside the city and inspect their collection. He readily consented. It was growing dark when they started, but his new friends assured him the place was at no great distance. They drove away in a fine carriage and pair, and the Count was delighted to display his knowledge to such interested and intelligent listeners. But so engrossed did he become in the conversation, that he did not notice in which direction they were driving, although he did once remark it was further than

he had expected. But the gentlemen reassured him by saying they were now quite close, and presently M. Valabrégue was gratified to see a mansion of some importance appear before them. The great iron gates of the drive stood open to receive them, and two immensely tall footmen in livery sprung forward to open the carriage door as they reached the house, and ushered in the party. The doors clanged to, behind him, and he found himself trapped in a lunatic asylum—the work of his loving wife !

He remained there seven terrible months, and would probably have stayed for life, had not two English ladies with whom he had been acquainted (I believe one was Lady Somers), visited the place by some extraordinary chance. They recognized him, and eventually with much trouble and the help of M. de Lesseps, of Suez Canal fame, they effected his release.

He came out a pauper, broken in mind and body, glad to accept a clerkship in the Suez Canal, whereby to live.

Whether his brother knew of his incarceration or not, is uncertain, but he certainly made no effort to have him released ; for he never forgave him the trick he had played him with regard to his mother's house.

As he had been regularly receiving his share of the rental of their joint property from his brother, he had no idea anything was wrong.

Being once on leave of absence, he went to Florence to visit his mother's grave in the garden of the villa. Whilst strolling in the grounds, he was stopped by a servant who asked him what he required. He replied he was Colonel Valabrégue, the owner of the villa. The servant said he must have made a mistake, as the house was his master's property. Somewhat amazed, the Colonel told him he knew nothing about it and had better call his master. It was not till then that poor Valabrégue discovered his brother's treachery. The blow was stunning. He asked permission to visit his mother's grave for the last time, and this was readily granted. Then he left, for ever; and so La Catalini, the sweet singer, sleeps her long sleep in the little chapel of the garden she loved so well, among strangers.

Mention of gardens reminds me that my uncle used to tell an amusing little story about Mrs. Loudoun, the celebrated botanist, who was living in Rome about this time, and whom my uncle often visited. She was a delightful old lady and gathered many interesting people around her. It appears that some very fine beech trees were growing at that time at Apsley House, the property of the Duke of Wellington, and Mrs. Loudoun was anxious to inspect them for some botanical reason. So she wrote to the Duke, asking for permission to see them. But as her writing was somewhat difficult to decipher, the

Duke read the word "beeches" as "breeches," and "Loudoun" as "London."

"I can't think," he remarked, "what the Bishop of London wants to see my breeches for! And which breeches? Ah! Yes! perhaps it is the pair I wore at the battle of Waterloo! But even then! Well! well! But he can look at them if he likes."

So he ordered his valet to despatch the garments in question to the Bishop of London—much to that gentleman's astonishment!

At Mrs. Loudoun's house my uncle first met Gibson the sculptor, who invited him to his house, and showed him a portfolio of drawings of astonishing beauty, sketched from memory, of Cherito the dancer.

Norman Shaw and Christopher, the architects, were also studying at Rome at this time as R.A. students, and it was with Christopher that my uncle attended an amusing entertainment held every year by the German students on the Campagna. The merrymaking began early in the morning. The students assembled at a little inn outside the city, where they donned their fancy costumes, for motley was banned in the Holy City itself. Then they formed a procession and set out for the Campagna. The King of the Frolics, his Queen, Secretary, and Jester occupied an open cart drawn by oxen with gilt horns. As my uncle had brought a page's costume, and was

moreover a particularly good-looking young man with his wavy red-gold hair, he was raised not only to the rank of Queen's page, but into the wagon itself, and so was driven out in state with the motley Royalties.

In former years the proceedings had always begun with a visit to a cave in which was supposed to reside the Cumean sybil, who would give cryptic replies to questions asked. But the police having discovered, or imagined they had discovered, hidden political meanings in the wise outpourings of the Oracle, a stop was put to this ancient custom. So the students had to content themselves with their games, which followed the classical tradition as closely as possible. These consisted of races on horseback, on donkeys, on foot, and in sacks ; also in throwing the lance.

An American won the horse race ; an amusing Mexican the donkey race ; the lance throwing prize was carried off by Sir Coutts Lindsay, while my uncle came in first in the sack race, and in such a brilliant manner that he was caught up, sack and all, by the crowd of delighted students and carried up to the top of the little hillock, on which sat not only the King of the Frolics, but another real King, although only a trifle less motley, to receive his prize.

The second King was Leopold of Bavaria, called "the Mad," who had lately been invited to abdicate (one of the troubles this time being the

vivacious Irish girl Lola Montez). Just then he was living in Rome, and, as he had always posed as a patron of the arts, he had intimated his august intention of being present at the sports, and giving away the prizes.

Hearing my uncle was an Englishman, he insisted on talking to him in "English," not one word of which could my uncle understand.

The prizes were cheap little vases on which the students had painted in classic guise the subject for which the prize had been given. My uncle's was adorned with little figures skipping along in sacks.

After the prize-giving came the feast, spread on the ground. This consisted of huge chunks of bread and meat, whilst four handsome students dressed as Ganymedes in leopard skins, went the round of the company with great jugs of wine which they poured into the mugs brought by the guests themselves. The cost of the whole magnificent entertainment came to about eighteenpence a head, Royalty thrown in.

There was an immense amount of picture-dealing in Italy at this time. The taste for old Masters had arisen in England and elsewhere, and dealers of all nationalities were travelling round the country trying to discover treasures in the way of pictures in hovels as well as palaces.

One dealer made a lot of money by announcing that he would pay five lire for any picture he cared

to buy, no more no less, no matter what size, by whom, or of what subject. Hundreds of pictures were brought to him, and he bought vast numbers. The greater part were rubbish, but amongst the rubbish were gems, and the gems paid handsomely for the rubbish. But in addition to the genuine dealing in pictures, there was also a fair amount of faking of old Masters, and very well the Italians did it ; but even they occasionally overlooked details as in the case of a picture discovered by a gentleman, and taken by him to a firm of old and reliable picture experts in London to be verified. The young man who waited on him regretted his father was out, but could he be of any assistance ? But the gentleman insisted he wished to see the senior partner, for although the picture was an undoubted *Fra Angelico*, he wished for expert corroboration.

“ Is that the picture ? ” inquired the young man, pointing to a flat parcel wrapped in paper that the gentleman had placed against the wall. “ Because if it is, I can tell you at once it is a fake.”

The owner was very indignant. “ How can you possibly say that ? ” he cried. “ You have not even seen it.”

“ I have seen enough to tell it is not an original. You will notice a piece of the wrapper is torn off that corner.”

“ Yes, but that is only the back of the picture.”

“Exactly, but that is sufficient to show me the panel it is painted on is mahogany; and mahogany only came to Europe with the discovery of America, and Fra Angelico was painting long before that time.”

What with the late wars, internal troubles, and one thing and another, the greater number of the aristocratic families of Italy were badly in need of money, and were parting with whole galleries full of priceless pictures for very little. Indeed, the Government suddenly awoke to the fact that the country was being denuded of half its art treasures and wisely passed a law that every picture of value was to bear the Papal seal. All such pictures were prohibited from leaving the country, unless by special permission.

In spite of this rule, however, many were smuggled across the frontier, including a Michael Angelo, now in the National Gallery.

As far as I can remember this is the story of how this was accomplished as it was told to my uncle with great gusto by the perpetrator of the deed, a Scotchman named Macpherson, who was by way of being an artist. In those days, people bought somewhat indiscriminately. Such was the sudden rage to possess old Masters that dealers had made a curious arrangement amongst themselves, namely, that after a customer had chosen a certain number of pictures, the dealer was allowed to retain one or two out of that number,

roughly, three out of eight. The explanation of this lay in the fact that the dealers themselves were so ignorant of what constituted a fine work of art, that they hoped by this means to glean information, from the faces at least, of their customers.

Mr. Macpherson was aware of this little habit. Consequently when he discovered in a picture shop, run by two very ignorant and highly suspicious dealers, what he thought might possibly be a Michael Angelo, he had to "gang" very warily indeed and only gave it a cursory glance when it came to picking out the picture he wanted. Had he bought it outright it would have roused their suspicions, and they might have even refused to let him have it.

So he chose a couple to begin with, whilst the dealers stood like vultures beside him, watching his face as he examined the canvases, then a third, which the men claimed as he had waxed somewhat enthusiastic over it. He let it go, grumbling, and chose another. Then lighting on a third, he evinced signs of deepest interest, which the dealers noted and refused to sell. He expostulated vehemently, but the men stuck to their bargain, and would not part with their prize. Upon this he flew into a rage, swearing he wanted nothing else, and would leave the shop. But having as they thought retrieved a gem, the dealers felt they could afford to be generous, and

told him he could have anything else he liked. At this Macpherson appeared to be slightly mollified and, although still grumbling and referring to the lost treasure at intervals, he picked out apparently with little interest, the Michael Angelo, a parcel of one or two minor pictures, and so the bargain was concluded.

As soon as he arrived home, he anxiously began to clean the principal face, and to his joy discovered it to be what he had suspected, a veritable, although unfinished, picture by Michael Angelo. His excitement was intense, and he began to make plans for sending it to England.

Being an unknown work, it naturally bore no seal and should have been allowed to pass out of the country as an ordinary painting. But unfortunately, somehow or other, the news leaked out. This was probably his own fault, as he had in his excitement confided in one or two people that he had discovered a Michael Angelo, and the Papal authorities swooped down to place their seal upon it; making it impossible for it to leave the country.

But Macpherson was a man of resource. He received the Papal envoys with politeness, entirely agreeing that such a masterpiece should naturally carry the seal—a foregone conclusion. In fact the picture stood there ready to receive it—but was it absolutely necessary to disfigure the picture by placing the seal on the front? The

law certainly said a seal, but no mention as to where it should be placed. Would not the back do as well ? The picture could always be turned round should any doubt arise as to its being genuine, and yet it would remain unspoilt. What other arguments he used must have been so convincing that the seal bearers began to see his side of the case (the back of the picture !), especially as Macpherson promised that the seal should not be tampered with, in fact Mr. Macpherson was virtuously indignant at such an idea. The Papal seal ! It would be almost sacrilege !

So the seal was formally placed on the back of the picture, or on a canvas fixed on the back—and the sealers departed, strong in the knowledge of duty done. The picture was then secured face upwards firmly in a case made exactly to fit it and despatched to the sea-coast for shipment to England. On being opened at the Italian Customs Office, no seal was visible where the insignia of officialdom should have been. Thus it was passed through as an ordinary painting. It arrived safely in England, where it was purchased for £2,000 (Think of it ! O, Ye American Dealers of to-day !) and hung in the National Gallery.

When the authorities got wind of the fact that a Michael Angelo had left the country, an officer of justice came hurriedly to interrogate Macpherson as to how he had dared to defy the laws

of the country. The virtuous Macpherson was most indignant and swore that the picture had been sealed, his story being confirmed by the seal bearers. It was therefore evident that the only people responsible were the Customs officials for letting a sealed picture pass through their hands.

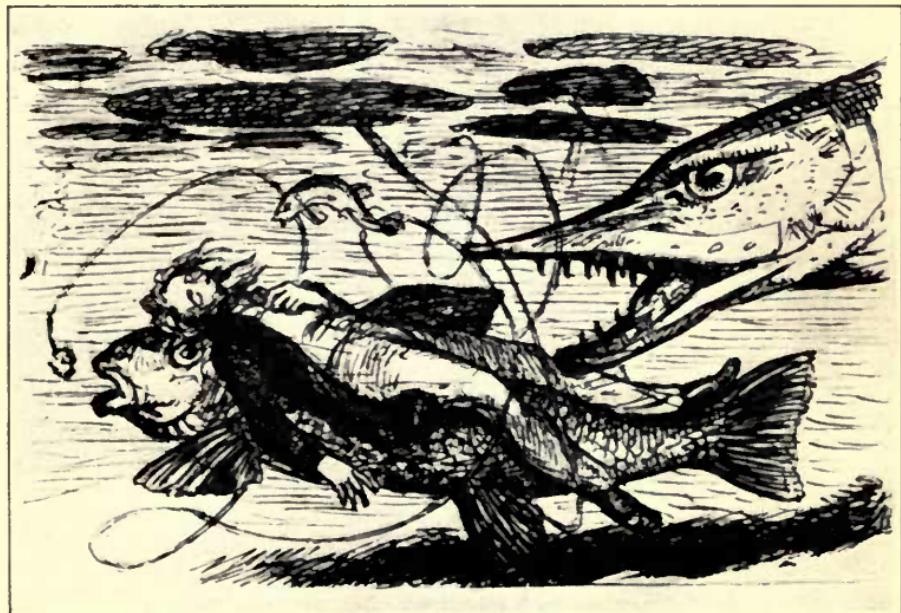
I believe the dealers themselves also brought some sort of action against him, which however they lost. And there the matter ended, except indeed, that Mr. Macpherson married a Miss Jameson, daughter of the author of *Lives of the Saints*, on the happy results of the sale. He was living in some style when my uncle made his acquaintance in a villa at Frascati, rented from a friend of my uncle's, a Monsignor Pennini.

This gentleman, an amiable and charming cleric, was engrossed in an invention for flying and had actually invented a flying machine. Whether it had ever even lifted itself off the ground is problematical, but it is interesting to think of this man, so far ahead of his time, trying to solve what seemed to most people in those days an impossible problem. He even gave my uncle his design, which to my great regret has been lost. It would have been interesting to compare it to the present "glider type," which I imagine it most probably resembled.



GALLANT RESCUE OF YEAMES FROM THE HEVER CASTLE MOAT
BY CALDERON AND STORY.

Drawn by Philip Hermogenes Calderon, R.A.



JOHN HODGSON'S DREAM AFTER FISHING AT HEVER.
By John Hodgson, R.A.

RECOLLECTION V

My uncle's departure for Rocca di Papa—Visits the Duke C.—The Duke's romantic story—The Pope flees from Rome—Troubles in Italy—The story of the Franciscan Friar—He returns to Florence—Goes back to England—Story of the taking of the Caucasus—Studies under John Phillips—His first picture bought by Uncle James—“Dressing for the Ball”—His one rejected picture—“Staunch Friends”—“Arming the young Knight”—“Sir Thomas More's farewell to his daughter”—“La Reine Malheureuse.”

AS Rome is exceedingly hot in the middle of summer and considered rather unhealthy, all the inhabitants who can do so move out into the country. My uncle, in company with an artist named Murch, departed to a lovely place then quite unsophisticated called Rocca di Papa in the Albian Hills. The rocks are most interesting, being of volcanic origin, with occasional lakes lying in the craters of extinct volcanoes. Together they visited Lake Albana, which impressed itself on his memory by reason of its steep sides, and because the ground surrounding the water was covered with tiny frogs which one crushed as one walked.

Near by was another beautiful piece of water, Lake Nemi, also at the bottom of a crater. On the shores of this lake stood a magnificent palace,

and on my uncle being told that it was the residence of the Duke C—— he suddenly remembered that he had been given a letter of introduction to the owner by a mutual friend. He mentioned the fact to Murch, who insisted on his presenting it.

The Duke received him most kindly, especially as he was a countryman of his wife, who was an Englishwoman. He regretted she was away and explained that she had gone to Malta, a British possession, for the confinement of her second child, who was to inherit her English property and she wished him to do so as an Englishman.

In the large salon he showed my uncle a portrait of Queen Victoria. "My wife's Sovereign," he said. Then walking the young man to the opposite end of the room, he paused before one of Victor Emanuel. "And mine," he added.

This incident showed he acknowledged Victor Emanuel in the face of the Pope, in consequence of which he was not as popular in certain circles as he might have been. In any case, his life had been anything but a path of roses. Indeed at one time he had a hard struggle to live, as his history will show. And since it was the theme of an Italian *cause célèbre*, I am violating no private confidence in repeating the story.

His mother was a strikingly handsome woman and had been married to the Duke only a few months before the birth of her son—fewer months,

in fact, than are generally considered necessary ! From his first moments of life she evinced a marked dislike to the unfortunate babe, ignoring and neglecting him. Then, when two other sons were born, this dislike turned to such a hatred that she eventually drove her eldest son from the house, destitute and uncared for, whilst she continued to shower affection and solicitude upon the others.

In such straits did the poor boy find himself, that but for the kindness of a friend who took charge of him, he would probably have starved. This good Samaritan brought him up as an artist, and as soon as he was able, he began to earn a precarious living by miniature painting and teaching. Amongst other work, he was engaged to teach the children of a wealthy English family resident in Italy. It was at this time that he met the lady who ultimately became his wife, she being the English governess of the establishment. Both were young, both good to look on, both in subordinate positions and both very lonely, so it was not surprising that a strong feeling of natural sympathy rose between them, which ended in love.

For on confiding to each other their respective stories they found a strange similarity. He was the disowned son of a noble Italian family, and she was the unacknowledged illegitimate daughter of a wealthy Liverpool merchant.

They became betrothed, but the engagement gave little promise of marriage, for both were penniless. However, Pandora's great treasure was theirs, likewise Youth. So promising each other that should any fortune come to them, they would instantly share it with each other, they bade farewell; for the English family returned home and took their governess with them.

But Fortune, that fickle jade, chose to smile upon the lovers. For the Duke suddenly died.

Quietly ignoring her first-born, the Duchess put his brother in his place. The obscure young artist then stepped boldly forward and, asserting his right under an old Roman law (on which the Napoleonic laws are based) that a child born under the roof of his mother's husband within a certain prescribed period of wedlock was to be considered legitimate, no matter who was the alleged father, he claimed his right to the Duke-dom.

It became a *cause célèbre* of the deepest interest, causing the greatest excitement in the Italian upper circles in which the principals moved. The Duchess and her sons fought the case fiercely. The wretched woman went so far as to proclaim openly her shame to the world from the witness-box, testifying to the illegitimacy of her first-born with her own lips. Her revelations were dreadful. She seemed to have lost all sense of shame in her hatred of her son, and in

her determination to prevent his inheritance. But her self-degradation was of no avail, for the old law carried weight, and the young artist was proclaimed the heir.

As soon as the decree had been made the young Duke hastened joyfully off to England to take the news himself to his lady love, who, by the way, was quite ignorant as to what was taking place. He stayed the night in Paris, and as he ran up the steps of his hotel, he made way for a lady coming down. She raised her head, their eyes met, and the next moment they were in each other's arms.

The wheel of Fortune had also turned for the little English governess. Her father had died and left her an unexpected fortune of £30,000 and she was hastening to give him the news herself. Quite a plot for a novel, only the reader would probably remark: "But such coincidences don't happen in real life!"

Although quite a number of English people were residing in Italy at that time, it was not altogether a peaceful place, as dissensions between King and Pope were continually occurring and much lawlessness prevailed under the guise of party feeling. Of this my uncle saw an instance. He was walking one day on the Piazza del Popolo, from the sloping sides of which fine views of Rome can be seen. At the end of it are two churches, and before these my uncle saw from a

distance that a festival was taking place. The gay costumes and jewellery of the contadina were flashing in the sun. It was a pretty scene, and he lingered to watch it.

Then as he was turning to go, his attention was suddenly arrested by a great commotion in the square below. Women were screaming, men shouting and fighting. It appeared that a band of ruffians had made their way into the square and were snatching the jewellery and heavy earrings from the women. They were on the point of decamping with their booty, when the military arrived, and some, at least, of the malefactors were caught. A few days later, while passing the square, my uncle saw a crowd of people collected at the gates, deeply interested in some event taking place within. He joined the throng and saw that one of the miscreants was being flogged, screaming horribly the while. My uncle strongly advocated flogging for assaults on women and children and weaklings, as he used to say that only cowards perpetrated such acts, and a coward is more afraid of physical pain than anything. He always affirmed that if only the "Cat" was more freely used in our police courts we should hear less of hooliganism and cowardly assaults.

But brigandage was only a sidelight showing the unsettled state of the country, for Italy was in a general state of upheaval. The Pope had

fled from Rome, and the Duke of Saxony had taken over the reins of government, forming a kind of Republic which even minted its own coins for a few weeks, after which the French reinstated the Pope.

I believe his Holiness nowadays never leaves the Vatican, but in those days he was accustomed to take the air in almost mediæval state in a gilt coach and four horses and even occasionally to walk a little when he got beyond the town. He may have an automobile by now, but it was from the golden coach that he alighted one day at the bridge and saw coming towards him a Franciscan friar mounted on a donkey. On seeing the Holy Father the friar promptly dismounted and saluted him with all humility.

“And pray,” asked the Pope, “can you tell me when St. Francis rode a donkey?”

An unusually quick-witted son of the Church, the friar replied: “At the same time, Your Holiness, as St. Peter drove in a coach and four.”

The Pope was delighted.

“My good man!” he cried. “You must not go back to your monastery. Men like you are wanted at the Vatican.”

So the Franciscan friar continued his ride . . . to the doors of the Vatican; and became in time one of its most distinguished luminaries. Unfortunately my uncle could not remember his name.

In 1857 my uncle returned to Florence, where he stayed again with his aunt and uncle till 1859, when he returned to London. His mother was now living in Queen's Gardens, Kensington ; his eldest brother, Henry, had taken over the reins of the family firm and was managing the English branch. His other brother, James, who was in charge of the Russian side, had returned to Taganrog, where he married the daughter of General Sobelevski. This formed another link with the Napoleonic past, as her grandfather, General Kirsanoff, had entered Paris in the year 1815 with the "Allied Troops" in command of his Cossacks. He was the last to hold the title of "Hetman" before it was adopted by the Tsarevitch.

Her family was a race of soldiers. Her uncle, General Philipsen, was the real conqueror of the Caucasus, although the glory, as is so often the case, was given to the Grand Duke in nominal command, who was seldom there. Russia had been fighting to get possession of the Caucasus for about fifty years, but had never succeeded, as the key to the situation was held by a fortified, cone-shaped rock situated at the junction of the two valleys, dominating the passes on both sides. A plateau on its summit was large enough to grow all the necessities for its garrison, and it was well supplied with water. Its rugged sides were practically inaccessible, and apparently

the only entrance to the fort was a steep and narrow road, defended by warlike tribesmen, commanded by a great patriot, a Mohammedan priest named Schamil, who for years had successfully resisted all attempts to capture it. Thus the Caucasus became the dumping ground of the "unwanteds" of the Russian army, its spend-thrifts and malcontents. The place became in fact a kind of reformatory for the "over-high-spirited" of its young officers, and a sufficiently long residence in its lonely wilds was generally enough to tame the most ardent spirits. Tolstoi was sent there, and describes the life in his earlier writings.

One day, however, one of his Cossacks informed General Philipsen that whilst he had been picking wild strawberries he had seen some goats walking along a track half way up the steep and precipitous side of the rock fortress at a spot to which there had appeared no possible means of ascent.

Acting on this hint, the General immediately made a search for what he guessed must mean a secret entrance to the back of the fortress, and eventually a path through a maze of rocks was discovered. He then made a massed attack upon the main entrance, sending a body of soldiers in single file up the rocky path to the small back entrance which, being unprotected, they easily entered and occupied.

Taken totally unawares, Schamil capitulated, presenting his sword to General Philipsen before the Grand Duke had time to return to the scene of glory.

So furious was the Duke at having lost this honour, that he loaded his General with reproaches, until in self-defence Philipsen asked Schamil why he had given it to him. The Caucasian answered loftily: "You, I knew: the Grand Duke I did not know." This was not surprising, as that gentleman was generally disporting himself elsewhere.

The Crimean War had caused the recall of Uncle James from Odessa. He then retired from the service and settled at Acomb House, near Cheltenham. He was so delighted with the railways (there being none in Russia at that time), that he always insisted on travelling by "parliamentary" trains, so as to enable him to "enjoy the view." Needless to say, a year or two of this amusement was sufficient to send him travelling by the fastest he could find.

He bought one of my uncle's earliest pictures as an "encouragement." It represented a page in mediæval costume. For by now my uncle had set up a studio for himself in Park Place, where he worked at small pictures, and at the same time attended evening classes under John Phillip in company with Leighton, Holman Hunt, Egg, Mulready, Marcus Stone, and others.

His second picture, which he himself described as "a foolish affair," was of a lady dressing for a ball. His next was an illustration of one of Bulwer Lytton's novels (then fashionable) which he sent to the Academy, but which was rejected. Mr. Frith, to whom he confided his disappointment, said he was "very surprised that it had not been accepted." But he changed his mind, my uncle said, when he was shown the picture!

Next year, 1859, showed a great advance in his work. "The Staunch Friends," a picture full of promise, and also a portrait of "B. Whishaw, of Cheltenham" were both accepted and hung in the National Gallery, where the Royal Academy exhibited their pictures until they moved to Piccadilly. From this date, until ill-health took the brush from his hand, every year saw at least one picture of his on the line. It were as though he had suddenly become a fine painter—at least to those who were ignorant of the long years of study and hard work which had preceded his arrival in the London world of art.

His picture "Staunch Friends" shows a gentleman in motley leaning on a balcony, confiding his half-cynical, half-laughing comments on the world to his serious monkey friend. It is full of light and colour; but next year's picture (1861), "Le Sonetto," is softer in tone, and deeper in shadow. It represents a poet standing in the open gallery of a Florentine house, caught in the

ecstasy of the composition of what is evidently a love poem. Both these pictures show a decided Italian influence.

In 1862 he sent a canvas called "Rescued," a stormy sea, from which a man is rescuing a child and handing him up to the half-frantic mother on the rocks above. But it was not until the following year that he showed his real promise and much of the style which distinguished the work of his later years in a fine picture entitled the "Meeting of Sir Thomas More with his Daughter after his Sentence of Death." The scene is laid in the Tower of London, where Sir Thomas More is seen on his way to the scaffold taking a tender farewell of his daughter Margaret Roper, who has broken her way through the guard to receive his blessing. The drawing of the figure and face of Sir Thomas More is remarkable for its calm and dignified beauty. It was the first of his many historical paintings. Finely conceived and carried out, it shows a remarkable grasp of the knowledge of composition.

This picture has passed entirely from our knowledge, as it was practically stolen. For after its exhibition at the Academy, not being sold, a dealer asked to be allowed to exhibit it in a gallery in Liverpool. It was accordingly despatched, but was never returned. The dealer went bankrupt, and the picture, being on his premises, was sold as a bad debt. This was a sad

blow to my uncle at the beginning of his career. He tried to retrieve it, but his lawyers advised him to let it go, as legal proceedings might end in costing him more than the value of the picture. He never heard of it again. If any kind reader should know of its whereabouts, the information would be gladly received by the writer of these recollections.

“*La Reine Malheureuse*” was next painted. It is a large canvas, with colours clean and strong, showing rather a departure from his previous style. Queen Henrietta Maria, having arrived from France with secret supplies for the Royalist party, was only saved from capture by the Parliamentary troops by hiding with her friends in a snow-covered ditch.

These two works mark the beginning of his subject pictures. Historical interest always appealed immensely to him, and he spared no trouble in obtaining perfect accuracy as to costumes and details of his periods.

“*Arming the Young Knight*” appeared in 1865. It was not a very interesting picture, and merely illustrated what its title suggests, a young man having his armour buckled on preparatory to entering the lists.

RECOLLECTION VI

1865—My uncle's marriage—"Acomb Lodge"—Lawn-tennis—St. John's Wood—Landseer's roses—Landseer tells a story to Queen Victoria—How Count d'Orsay dodged the bailiffs at Madame Tussaud's—The St. John's Wood Clique—The Clique decorates the walls of Mr. Hodgson's studio—Mr. and Mrs. John Hodgson—The Clique gives parties—Songs—Mr. Calderon sings Grand Opera—Fred Walker and Val Prinsep go to a fancy dress ball—Du Maurier helps to entertain—"The Inspired Idiot"—The Clique take their yearly trip to the country—Leslie and Hodgson paint a signboard—Carrying out the conditions of a will—David Wynfield's photographs—My uncle loses his spectacles and saves his life.

A MEMORABLE year for my uncle was 1865, for on August 18th, Anne Winfield, daughter of the late Major James Stainbank Winfield, of the East India Company, and grandniece of Sir David Wilkie, became his wife. It proved a union of great happiness, lasting until after they had celebrated their golden wedding.

They settled in a pretty little house in the Grove End Road, St. John's Wood, which they named "Acomb Lodge" after his Uncle James's house near Cheltenham where many happy days had been spent. It was a name of good omen, as many more happy days were also spent there.

It was a tiny house, but large enough to possess a "spare room," as we used to call it

then, “guest chamber,” as we call it, I must confess, more charmingly, now. And that room was generally occupied. Otherwise it was a very small house, and it was always a matter of conjecture as to how it had accommodated the previous tenant, Santley, the singer, and his numerous family, including a page boy. It was ultimately decided that the page boy must have slept in the bath.

Later, it was considerably enlarged to accommodate four motherless nephews and nieces (myself included) of whom this noble and warm-hearted couple took charge rather than let them pass into the hands of strangers, which would have occurred otherwise, as their father’s work necessitated his being abroad.

It stood in a fair-sized garden, and the end wall abutting on Lord’s cricket-ground, we had (before the hideous Pavilion was built) a very good view of the cricket; and we children became quite authoritative on the respective merits of the great cricketers of the day. On big match days there was always a crowd of friends to view the play, and “Yeames’s Wall” with its row of pretty girls, the daughters of the artists living near, became quite a feature.

Eight large trees of apples and pears, including a Windsor, a Bon Crétien, and a Jargonelle, grew within, so in the autumn we had no lack of fruit; and as for rhubarb—we grew positively to hate rhubarb tart, cook gave it to us so often, as it

flourished luxuriantly over the graves of numerous much-lamented families of kittens which at intervals she "laid to rest" in a certain corner of the garden in handy proximity to the kitchen door.

In spite of the smoke and soot of London the garden always seemed to produce flowers of some sort or another, thanks to my uncle, who worked in it whenever he could. He loved flowers and was also fond of gardening. I think an occasional hour with his spade or lawn-mower had quite a sedative effect on his highly strung and rather nervous temperament. In the spring it boasted a wonderful bed of lilies of the valley which, extending from end to end of one long shady wall, filled the air with concentrated sweetness.

The lawn was just large enough for a single tennis-court ; and was much used for practice as the Renshaws and Colonel Osbourne, R.E., had lately introduced amongst us the "new" game of "lawn-tennis." Tennis had became suddenly very fashionable, and no garden party was really the thing without "Lawn-tennis" printed in the corner of its invitation card. Even if there was only one court, you would be invited to bring your racquet (funny oblong-looking things) if only to have the pride and pleasure of carrying it through the streets. Ladies tripped round the grass courts in ankle-length dresses with bustles, eighteen-inch waists, and little straw "boaters" tipped over their noses, and cried : "Yours,

CALDERON

LEIGHTON



CALDERON AND LEIGHTON ARE ELECTED ASSOCIATES OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

By Fred Walker, A.R.A.

WYNFIELD
YEAMES
LESLIE
MARKS
HODGSON
STORY &
WALKER.

Partner," if they did not want to stoop (and stooping was quite difficult with eighteen-inch waists) or if it was too hot to run.

Of course with the Renshaw and Colonel Osbourne set, it was a very different thing. They were magnificent players and special fours would be made up when they were expected. But they played usually on the new hard courts near the St. John's Wood Station, where poor Colonel Osbourne so tragically died from heart failure during a game with one of the Renshaws.

My uncle and aunt had chosen St. John's Wood, since a number of brother artists and friends were living there. They were all more or less, in those days, struggling young men, living in modest little houses, of which—before the advent of the present ugly blocks of flats—there were many to be seen in the "Wood." The buildings were mostly two-storied, standing in their own grounds, and shut away from prying eyes by uneven old walls, over which May blossoms, lilac, and laburnum flung their fragrance of purple and pink and gold in the spring, and against which yellow-brown leaves would pile themselves as they scurried down the gravel and flagged pavements of the quiet roads before the autumn winds.

For in those days St. John's Wood with its trees and gardens was a thing apart from the noisy bustling city of which it was but an outskirt—one could hardly call it a "suburb," it

had so little of the atmosphere one connects with a “suburb.” The real country began almost as soon as the old *Atlas* ‘bus, complete with straw-strewn floor, and knife-board top, drew rein at the “Swiss Cottage.”

Dividing Grove End Road from Grove Road—where, by the way, lived George Eliot in a roomy white house set in a charming garden—came St. John’s Wood Road, a broad thoroughfare, on one side of which stood a low white rambling house, embedded in trees, and with a large garden which sloped down to the banks of the canal. This was the home of Sir Edwin Landseer, R.A.

Henry Davis, R.A., occupied this house after Landseer’s death, and the lawns were converted into fine tennis-courts, as Mr. Davis was passionately fond of the game. But now that charming garden and almost historic house has been swept away, and a hideous block of workmen’s flats disfigure the once pretty road.

Landseer was very fond of his garden and gave big garden-parties in the summer. The first was always held in early June to herald in his roses, of which he was very proud.

One year, however, the roses failed to bloom at their expected time. This greatly distressed Landseer, for to his mind, they were the feature of the entertainment. Great, then, was his astonishment, as he came out of his house on the morning of the party, to see them all in full bloom. Closer examination disclosed the fact

that George Leslie, then a sportive young man (but whose kindly gaiety and goodness of heart time never succeeded in quenching) had purchased a large number of coloured paper roses and had busied himself in the early morning by fastening them to the bushes.

Landseer painted extremely rapidly, and George Leslie, who was a great favourite of his and a *persona grata* in his studio, used to say that he would often see the blank canvas of the morning transformed into an almost finished picture by the afternoon, or if Sir Edwin did not approve of what he had painted during the day, he would ruthlessly wipe it all out in the evening.

He painted a good deal in Scotland, and was a much-sought-after guest in the home of many a Highland chieftain, not so much on account of his art, as his love of sport, his good company, and his ability as an after-dinner raconteur.

In fact, to show how little his talents weighed with these sons of moor and mountain, he would relate with much gusto how he had once met a former Scottish host of his in London, who, after the usual greetings, asked him, making an airy motion with a couple of fingers in the air as though wielding a brush :

“ And do you—er—still go on—er—doing that ? ”

He used to be accused by some of seeking after Royal favours, but I think it was Royalty who sought him, as he was a constant guest at

Windsor and Balmoral. On one occasion, when the Prince Consort started to examine some canvases leaning face forward to the wall of the studio, and therefore, by an unwritten law, not on view, he stopped him, saying : " Those canvases, Your Royal Highness, are not to be looked at." This, it must be admitted, did not look like courting favour, but rather risking the loss of it.

Queen Victoria, who was a great lover of animals, used to delight in his stories of the sagacity of animals, a favourite subject of hers.

One evening he had almost exhausted his repertoire of narratives, and, as the Queen still appeared to want more, he had the temerity to tell the following tale—the subject under discussion being the great sagacity of poodles, the fashionable dog of the moment.

He had been walking in the country, Sir Edwin said, with a friend who owned a poodle of whose cleverness he was extremely proud. He assured Sir Edwin that the dog would retrieve anything he was ordered, no matter what the distance. To prove this he placed a £5 note under a stone, showed it to the poodle, and then ordered him to follow him home, a matter of at least a couple of miles. On arrival he turned to the animal and instructed him to return and fetch it.

Fido wagged his ornamental tail, bounded in the air with joy at the trust confided in him, and darted off to fulfil the commission ; whilst his

owner and the guest settled down to await his return.

They waited some time—in fact a good deal longer than was necessary for the going and coming of Fido. Sir Edwin began to twit his friend about the betrayed trust and to suggest their going themselves to fetch the note.

But the owner stuck to his guns, and his chair, and they continued to wait.

“It is plain he has made a mistake and cannot find it,” said Sir Edwin.

The faithful owner began to feel anxious, but unshaken.

“I have never known him to fail. Some accident must have happened to him.”

They waited another hour. No Fido. Finally the owner, feeling nervous, agreed to sally forth to search for the dog, and they were on the point of starting when they saw slowly approaching in the distance, the missing quadruped. But very, very slowly—no longer with the airy bound that distinguished his departure—but with lagging feet and drooping head.

“Evidently couldn’t find it,” said Sir Edwin.

“No, no, something has happened.”

Slowly, mutely, the dog reached his master’s side, opened his mouth, and let five sovereigns fall upon the ground. The intelligent animal had been to the bank to get the note changed.

That night, as Sir Edwin was preparing to get into bed, he heard a knock at the door. On

opening it he found Prince Albert in dressing-gown and slippers standing without.

“Excuse me for disturbing you, Sir Edwin, but the Queen wished me to let you know how much she enjoyed the anecdotes you related this evening, but hopes you did not think she altogether believed the last one.”

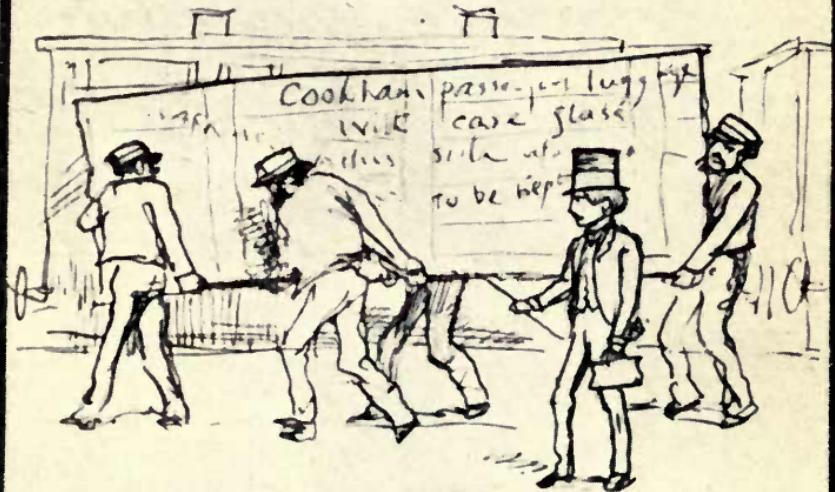
Count d'Orsay, the “Last of the Dandies,” was by way of being a friend of Sir Edwin's. One morning he surprised the artist by calling on him before breakfast, with the explanation that he could only visit friends before 10 a.m. and after 6 p.m., as between these hours he was liable to be arrested for debt; a chronic state with him.

Having breakfasted, he suggested that Landseer should walk back with him to his lodgings. On the way they passed Madame Tussaud's exhibition of waxworks in its old quarters in Baker Street, and strolled in. Presently d'Orsay became uncomfortably aware that not only had it passed ten o'clock, but that two seedy-looking individuals were evidently shadowing him, following his footsteps from room to room.

Taking them for bailiffs, d'Orsay tried to dodge them, slipping from one apartment to another, behind figures and curtains, endeavouring in every way to evade them and leave the building. But to no effect, for wherever he went, they followed; when he reached a door, they were there before him, and he was forced to retreat.

My dear Yeames

I found yr kind letter
on my return home right -
I must go away by the
5 train so make all excuse
for re. / there should be
mention of yours very kind
F. Walker



3. St. P. Place

June 25 66

Escape seemed hopeless. They had him as completely as a rat in a trap. In despair, he saw the prison gates closing behind him, gates that could never open again, for his debts were colossal. But there was no help for it, and so he determined to meet his fate like the gentleman he was. He swung round, drew himself to his full height, folded his arms across his chest and demanded in his grandest manner what their business was with him.

The seedy individuals bowed meekly, were most apologetic, and explained that they had been commissioned by Madame Tussaud to ask him if he would be so very kind as to do her the honour, the very great honour, of giving her a sitting for a model of himself. In a moment d'Orsay's attitude changed, and in his most condescending manner he consented to pose.

Sir Edwin had two brothers. Tom, an Associate of the Royal Academy, was an engraver of merit. He reproduced most of his famous brother's pictures, and was quite a character in his way. He was stone deaf, and accounted for it by the fact that he was drawing in the Tower of London, when the salute of twelve guns to announce the birth of the Prince of Wales (Edward VII) suddenly went off beside him; which was the last sound he ever heard.

He used to talk very loudly and had a habit of unconsciously speaking aloud his own thoughts. Thus, on walking round the Academy on private

view day, he would look at the pictures, and then, on meeting the painter of one or another, would say : " So that is your picture, is it ? Glad to see it here," and then, continuing aloud his own thoughts—" and a damn bad picture too."

The other brother, who was by way of trying to be an artist, had great difficulty in selling his pictures. One year, however, he painted a subject picture in which figured a dog. Not being an animal painter, he got his brother Edwin to paint it in for him.

Some dealer having got wind of this, appeared in his studio, admired the picture, and made an offer for it. As the offer was exceptionally good, the delighted artist promptly closed with it. But his joy was considerably tempered when he discovered shortly after, that the dealer had cut out the painting of the dog, framed it, and sold it as the work of Edwin Landseer for double the price he had given for the whole picture in its original state.

Another character in the artist world was J. R. Herbert, R.A. Although he had only been on a short trip to France, and could not speak French, he always dressed like a Frenchman and spoke broken English. Landseer used to say that he " tumbled down whilst at Boulogne, and broke his English," and added, when Herbert went on a trip to Algiers or Egypt (I forget which), " he will return this time, speaking Gum Arabic."

He and Landseer were walking one day down

Regent Street, when they were importuned by a beggar.

“ Tut ! Tut ! poor fellow ! Poor fellow ! ” said Herbert. He felt in his pocket, but finding nothing, borrowed a shilling from Landseer, which he handed with a great air to the beggar.

Not being repaid, Landseer applied to Herbert for it, a few days later.

Herbert looked regretfully at him.

“ No ! No ! my friend,” he replied. “ I vill not repay you. For if I did, I should be the means of depriving you of doing a charity.”

Edwin Armitage, R.A., and his wife, who were wealthy and famed for their good dinners, were giving a party one night to some distinguished French ladies, and having heard Herbert talk (but not being aware of the Boulogne expedition), were under the impression that he must be of French extraction and invited him to meet them. He arrived in clothes of elaborate French cut, and was introduced to the honoured guests as the celebrated Royal Academician. Immediately they poured forth a torrent of French. Herbert made a low bow, waited till they had ceased, and then replied in broken English :

“ Mesdames, I greatly admire your country, your most *charmant* ladies, and your language—but I cannot speak it.”

A fine group of young painters were now rising up within the portals of Burlington House ; men who made the Academy the great institution it

ultimately became. Amongst its members were the nine young men (including the two honorary members) who formed the celebrated little “St. John’s Wood Clique.” For each of this small circle, except its actual founder, David Wilkie Wynfield (who died young), became in turn members of the Academy.

When Calderon and Leighton were elected Associates, Frederick Walker (he and Valentine Prinsep were the sole “honorary members”) drew a delightful cartoon showing the paralyzing effect the event had on the morale of the rest of the Clique. An examination of this masterpiece will explain how each member stood the shock. Wynfield is about to take a photograph of the scene. My uncle merely looks puzzled; Marks, having entirely succumbed beneath the blow, is having liquid refreshment charitably administered to him by the kindly Leslie; Hodgson and Storey are consoling each other; whilst Walker, palette in hand, is indignantly gazing up at the god-like beings enthroned above him, and at whose feet are grovelling the Aristocracy and Plutocracy of Great Britain.

The original idea of this little band of painters was the exchange of friendly criticism of each other’s works, and was inaugurated by David Wynfield, and once a week, on Saturdays, the members would meet at each other’s houses to draw from some given subject within a certain time. The results would then be severely “grilled”—in

other words, criticized ; hence their badge—a tiny gridiron, with the motto : “Ever on thee.”

In summer the meetings would be held at Wynfield's house at Park Place Villas, which possessed a garden, so that croquet would be arranged for the afternoons, and the sketching and club work would follow, or vice versa. But as the cold weather approached they would meet at each other's studios, and when the drawing and “grilling” was over, spend the rest of the evening in playing “Preference,” a Russian game of cards, or in singing, acting, or some pleasant foolery. Then a little “mallet” before parting for the night. The “mallet” was their name for a convivial glass of whiskey and water. I do not know why it was so called, unless, indeed, it was meant to indicate the tool with which a nail was struck into one's coffin. The winnings and losings at “Preference” were carefully noted, and any little gains were always handed over to the care of Mrs. Hodgson for the purchase of the “Mallet.”

The Hodgsons' house in Hill Road was the favourite meeting-place. Two rooms had been knocked into one to make John Hodgson's studio, and it was the scene of many a gay little Clique gathering. Mr. and Mrs. John Hodgson made a perfect host and hostess, and gave one a feeling of welcome the moment one entered their house. To show their appreciation, the Clique undertook to decorate this room, each man exhibiting a specimen of his own particular style in so doing.

One of Walker's inimitable little sketches shows the work in progress.

Besides being a fine artist, John Hodgson was an exceptionally brilliant and versatile man ; a good linguist, and possessed withal of a keen sense of humour. I have been at a dinner-party when he kept the table in one long ripple of laughter from the beginning of the meal to the end. His Scotch sermons were a joy, especially the one giving as illustration the "great black tom cat," who did not cut his feet "even unto the effusion of blood" when walking on the glass-spiked garden wall, because, according to the Scriptures, he "walked sarcumspectly."

Besides being a good talker, he possessed the great art of being a good listener ; or, at any rate, of appearing interested in the conversation of others. Occasionally he would "give the show away," when his mind wandered to other things, by saying "Yes" or "No" in the wrong places. This rather knocked the bottom out of any conceit one had been harbouring regarding one's own conversational powers. Besides his art, he had a most facile pen for poetry or prose, and was extremely versatile in many ways. He was a great fisherman and very fond of animals. His affection for dogs once nearly cost him his life, for in Russia as a young man, he stopped to fondle a friend's dog one day, when to his astonishment the animal suddenly flew at him and bit him. As he and the dog had always been friends, it struck him that something

must be wrong and it was probably sickening for rabies. There was no time to go for a doctor, as it was in the depths of the country ; so with great presence of mind and strength of will, he coolly placed the burning end of the cigarette he was smoking on the bite, and held it there until the wound was thoroughly cauterized. The dog went raving mad within a few hours and had to be destroyed, so in the words of the immortal poet—

“ The man recovered from the bite,
The dog it was that died.”

I once asked my uncle for his definition of a really charming woman, and he answered at once : “ Mrs. John Hodgson.” Her charm lay beyond the mere externals of a sweet face, graceful figure, and gracious manner, for she had a warm heart filled with kindness and love. I never heard her say an unkind thing of anyone ; instead she had always a word of excuse, or a suggestion for making allowances.

Therefore it was not surprising that the Hill Road house was generally the headquarters of the Clique. Occasionally, one or other of the little coterie would give a special party when guests would be invited, and all the members would help to make it a success with a song, a story, or an impromptu entertainment.

Stacy Marks had several songs, of which perhaps the favourite was about a certain justly famous “ Betsy Waring, who went out a-charing ” with the delicate refrain :

“ Oh ! *Drat* them rheumatics,
 Which comes of damp attics,
 A-nipping and g-nawing,
 A poor body so.”

the “ Oh—h ! ” being a long-drawn-out wail of agony.

He occasionally composed his own songs, topical and up-to-date. One entitled “ Your ‘Umbre Servant, Crewe,” was the upshot of some letters which passed between himself and Lord Crewe, in which the terminal “ Your humble servant, Crewe ” so tickled his risibility, that he turned it into a song which was a great success with the Clique. He always assumed an expression of the utmost mock humility when he came to the words : “ Your ‘umble servant.”

George Leslie’s great song was about a certain “ Billy ” who is courting a young lady with whom he wished to “ walk out.” His suit is objected to by the lady’s mamma, until she learns the joyful news that Billy has five hundred pounds, when she urges her daughter to look kindly upon Billy, in words something to this effect :

“ Oh ! No ! my dear !
 You did not hear,
 My last remark quite clearly,
 For Billy is a nice young man
 And I am sure he loves you dearly.

“ And so, my dear,
 I will take care,
 To wake you up quite early,
 For to take that nice long walk
 Across the fields of barley.”

Occasionally, too, he would raise his long lean body (there was over six foot of it) from his chair, and, leaning in approved style over a table, he would deliver a wonderful "after-dinner" speech in a most serious and pompous manner. It was, of course, a skit on mayoral banquet speeches, utter rubbish, but immensely funny.

Adolphus Storey, or "Dolly" as he was called, would sing bogus Indian and Spanish songs to national tunes, not one word of the real language, but merely gibberish which he would improvise as he sang. But sung to the right sort of accompaniment, it sounded exactly like the real thing. Another of his most realistic imitations was about a couple of cats making love from either side of a brick wall.

His brother-in-law, my uncle's old fellow-student, Philip Hermogenes Calderon, was perhaps the most impressive member of the Clique. He was a man of splendid stature and physique, with the appearance of a Spanish *hidalgo*. When questioned as to his nationality he was wont to reply :

" My father was a Spaniard, my mother was French, therefore I am naturally an Englishman."

He was a brilliant man with a somewhat caustic sense of humour and great dramatic ability. His favourite song was that of Mephistophele's from Gounod's "Faust," and his make-up for the part was perfect, but unfortunately his voice was not very strong. Once, however, at a fancy-dress ball given by Edwin Long, R.A.,

he appeared on the stage at the end of the ball-room, dressed in a gorgeous costume as Mephistopheles, and to everybody's astonishment sang his song with a magnificent voice and most dramatic action. The audience was enthralled.

It afterwards transpired that a brother-in-law of Mr. Long's, possessed of a beautiful voice but no presence or dramatic sense, had been singing from the back of a curtain directly behind Calderon, who had been opening and shutting his mouth and going through all the dramatic actions. The result was a great success.

It was at this ball that the two honorary members of the Clique—Val Prinsep and Fred Walker, appeared together as the brothers Valentine and Orson. Walker, a boyish, good-looking young man of slim build, arrived as Orson clad in a bear's skin, and carrying an immense property club; whilst Val Prinsep, who was a big heavy man with a great head of fuzzy hair, came arrayed as Valentine. Their entry made a great impression.

A constant and welcome guest at the Clique parties—or rather, I should say “guests,” as his handsome and charming wife would often accompany him, was George du Maurier, the *Punch* illustrator and novelist. He had a very pretty and sympathetic voice in which he would sing delightful little French songs, for he was one of those nice people who, although a master of his craft, was always ready to con-

tribute to the success of an evening by his efforts, whether by singing or acting, or any other way.

He was an extraordinarily versatile man. Singing, acting, drawing, or writing, all seemed to come equally easily to him. When the tragedy of impending blindness threatened to end his career as an artist, he suddenly produced his wonderful novel *Trilby*; as unique a triumph in the literary world as his drawings had been in the world of Art.

I can well remember my uncle's excitement and delight when he first read it. After *Trilby* came other books equally intriguing and with the same intimate touch which immediately made one feel old friends with his characters, just as one used to do with Mrs. Ponsonby de Tompkins, Sir George and Lady Midas, and all the rest of those dear *Punch* people of du Maurier's creation.

The songs in his repertoire, in which the Clique used to delight most, were: "Pourquoi, Margot?" "Bon jour, Suzanne, ma fleur de bois," and "Je suis triste." In later years this latter song was sung by his famous son in the woodland scene of Barrie's *Dear Brutus*. And of course there was "Vin a quat' sous," a drinking song hailing from the Latin Quarter. It had a rousing chorus with a hiccup in the refrain, in which all joined with great gusto. To have had the privilege of hearing the members of the Clique lifting up their voices and hiccupping gloriously together must have been most edifying.

Du Maurier died comparatively young. Too young, alas ! for those who looked forward to more pleasure from his facile pen. Ably, however, have his two sons carried on his name. To mention Sir Gerald du Maurier as one, is sufficient; whilst the other—Colonel du Maurier—is not his name amongst those to whose memory the greatest memorial of our country has been raised ? To his country he gave of his talents (he was the author of *An Englishman's Home*, written in a vain attempt to awaken England to her danger) . . . and afterwards his life. And what can man do more ?

Another visitor who occasionally contributed to the entertainment was Legros, afterwards of the Slade School. He possessed great powers of imitation, for although he spoke extremely bad English which a lifetime in England never seemed to improve, he could yet imitate the English language in gibberish, in much the same way as Storey did in his Indian and Spanish songs. He would reply to Leslie's pompous "after-dinner" speeches in a solemn hash of vowels and consonants which one could have sworn was the tongue of Great Britain rather indistinctly spoken. He would also act whole scenes from second-rate French theatres, very inflated, grandiose, and extremely funny.

Of all the voices, however, my uncle's was the best, as he possessed a very sweet tenor. Unfortunately his ear was poor, which made him

shy of singing in public, although when his work was going well, we would hear snatches of grand opera issuing from the studio door, and knew all was content within.

Mr. Calderon drew a sketch of him as the proverbial tenor in Italian opera, and my uncle retaliated with a drawing of Mr. Calderon. Both are good likenesses. But whereas Mr. Calderon was as lean as represented, my uncle never attained the dimensions generally associated with operatic tenors. His temperament was too active.

But good or bad, whatever might be the entertainment offered, an invitation to a Clique party gave one a certain prestige in the art world of that time, and was not to be despised ; especially as the little coterie was gradually becoming—as each member was being drawn through the sacred portals of the R.A.—a power unto itself.

The man who might almost have been said to have worshipped at its shrine, was Frederick Walker, the Robert Louis Stevenson of Art. He was beloved by all its members, and was undoubtedly the subject du Maurier had in his mind when he created the character of “Little Billee.” Curiously enough, I have always thought the photograph taken by Wynfield of Walker was much more like du Maurier’s drawing of Little Billee, than du Maurier’s drawing of Walker himself at the end of the book, when he describes Little Billee’s meeting with Walker in London.

Marks nicknamed him "The Inspired Idiot," a name that stuck to him in the annals of the Clique. He seemed incapable of keeping his hands off pencil and paper; and unconsciously took upon himself the post of chronicler of the Clique's doings. He left behind him a little trail of rough pencil sketches, scribbled on scraps of paper, old envelopes, anything that came handy, recording events which would otherwise have been forgotten. He could hardly write a note without adding a few lines of drawing, full of affection, humour, and delicacy, and always with that magic touch. Meeting for the first time my uncle's eldest brother Henry, and being much struck by their great likeness to each other, he immediately produced a comic little drawing on the back of an envelope, which he called the "Yea-mese Twins," representing them in the same attitude as that in which the "Siamese Twins" were generally advertised. On another occasion, when leaving for the country, he drew what he called his "Dream of the Clique," depicting himself—a delightful little figure in a rough walking suit, hat, and stick—gazing sadly at the shades of his beloved friends who are passing from his sight. My uncle, who had just married, is holding up a wedding-ring, as arm in arm with his brother-in-law Wynfield, they are floating away to the left. Wynfield, in his turn, is waving aloft the parchment of his family tree,—his hobby being genealogy.



WALKER'S DREAM OF HIS FAREWELL TO HIS BELOVED "CLIQUE."

By Fred Walker, A.R.A.

Calderon, immaculate in frock coat and with tiny sprouting horns to illustrate his nickname of "The Fiend" (possibly on account of his slightly sardonic type of humour) is sailing off in the middle distance with Marks, who, having made a hit in that year's Academy with his "Toothache in the Middle Ages" (a Jester suffering from that complaint) is holding a fool's wand. Leslie, the tallest of the Clique, is seen carrying off on his arm the smallest, Storey, dressed like a small boy; whilst Hodgson, who was painting in the Elizabethan period at that time, is wearing a ruff.

He once had to decline some Clique party, and drew a little picture of himself superintending the removal of an immense canvas to the country, by rail. This was on a letter to my uncle.

His early life had been a hard struggle with poverty. He was a devoted son to his widowed mother, whom at one time he and a sister practically supported. Eventually, when he became famous, he was able to provide a happy home for them. His sister adored him, and was heartbroken at his death.

As a boy his one longing was to paint, and somehow or other he managed to get lessons. David Wynfield, always ready to help and befriend, gave him his first paintbox, as he was too poor to buy one himself. Once started, his genius soon asserted itself. The Clique were the first to appreciate him, and Agnew, the picture

dealer, a clever man, noted their admiration and belief in him, and bought his pictures at comparatively low prices and kept them as an investment. A good one, as things proved, for "The Ferry" eventually netted £1800, an enormous price in those days.

Alas ! that this brilliant young life should have drawn to so early a close.

He was always a fragile little man, extremely good-looking, with the profile of a Greek god. Children adored him, and my uncle said one of the most touching sights at his funeral at the little riverside churchyard at Cookham, where he was buried beside the river he loved so well, was the number of village children who threw wild flowers on his coffin as it was being lowered into the grave.

The doctors had recommended a sea voyage in the hope of prolonging his life, so Walker promptly arranged a farewell dinner to the Clique. Even then, ill as he must have been, he could not resist sketching the steamer in which he expected to sail, on his note of invitation to my uncle.

That farewell dinner to his beloved Clique was the last he ever gave. For when the ship sailed, it went without him. He was too ill to move, and in a few days had passed beyond the veil, felled by consumption, the dread disease that shortly after carried off the founder of the Clique, David Wynfield.

But let us forget for a while the “inevitable end” and hie back to the days of hope and happiness, when the Clique being still young would celebrate the yearly despatch of pictures to the R.A. by a day out in the country, to blow away the metaphysical cobwebs, whilst the wives swept out the actual ones in the studios.

The Thames Valley, subject of many a fine canvas by Walker and Leslie, and as yet unspoilt by motor-boats and cheap excursions, was generally chosen. But if a whole day could not be managed, then beautiful Hampstead Heath claimed them. Hampstead, remember, as it was then, undefiled by demon builders, a real wild heath of acres and acres of sand, bracken, and gorse-covered country, real country, when for a few hours these Royal Academicians in embryo would cast care to the winds and behave like so many boys let out from school.

Leaving the knife-board of the old *Atlas* 'bus at the Swiss Cottage, these gay young men would tramp up the muddy meadow (now Fitzjohn's Avenue) to the stile at the top, past the old church standing at the end of its flagged approach, flanked by Georgian houses, some still displaying their original torch extinguishers; through the little lane along the wood fence, and from thence to the Pond. Here with a feeling of exhilaration, they would look back over the smoky roof-tops of the London they had left

behind, and would then start tramping off through country lanes, sweet scented with the first breath of spring, stopping to admire a quaint cottage here, a "nice little bit" there; to ponder awhile over some magic touch of atmosphere, or watch the cloud-flecked sky above their heads. Ultimately, they would foregather at the "Spotted Dog" or "Jack Straw's Castle," where the little party would sit down with many a joke and jest, to a lunch of cold beef, pickles, and ale, to which, without doubt, ample justice was done.

But the Thames Valley, with its quaint riverside villages and old inns, remained first favourite. It was further from town and still delightfully primitive, and these overgrown boys—or rather unspoilt men—felt more free from restraint there, and romped and fooled gloriously.

On one occasion Leslie led Marks solemnly down a village street, one pretending to be a deaf imbecile, and the other his keeper. In a very loud voice Leslie kept pointing out places of silly interest to Marks, such as: "Yes, that's the Public House—Pub-lic H-house—" Marks looked mystified, and Leslie repeated himself, "PUB-LIC HOUSE." "Where people go to get drunk—drunk—beer, B-E-E-R," much pantomime, and shouting down Marks's ear, who listened with idiotic solemnity, greatly to the interest of the village yokels.

On another occasion the whole party turned

their coats inside out in the train, and emerged thus arrayed, to the unconcealed astonishment of the stationmaster. Once Marks made the guard of their train furiously angry by popping his head out of the train at every station to ask silly questions in an anxious voice, such as :

“ Guard ! Guard ? ”

“ Yes, sir ? ”

“ Have we come to the next station yet ? ”

Or : “ Guard ! Guard ! ”

“ Yes, sir ? ”

“ Guard, are you sure the next station we are coming to is the right one ? ”

And so on, till the guard, with the conviction slowly dawning on him that he was being “ had,” would refuse to look their way.

Childish ? Yes, perhaps. But fraught with high spirits and honest laughter ; a love of life and good fellowship such as seems hardly to be understood in these days. And certainly, each of these men has left his footprint on the sands of Time.

Years afterwards Leslie and Hodgson, as full-blown Royal Academicians, revisited their old haunts on the river, and stayed at the inn at Wargrave. They noticed that the sign depicting St. George and the Dragon was almost obliterated, and offered to repaint it for the landlady, who gratefully accepted their offer, although their names carried no particular meaning to her.

So on one side Leslie painted St. George in fearsome conflict with the Dragon, and on the reverse Hodgson, who could not resist being funny, depicted the Dragon vanquished beneath the feet of the Saint, who is refreshing himself with a tankard of the inn's best.

Mine hostess quite approved of the first side of the picture, but was somewhat dubious as to the orthodoxy of the other. It was so totally different from the stereotyped order of signboard, and she was so chaffed about it by the villagers that she was on the point of taking it down, when someone who recognized the hand of the artist explained to her what a prize she had acquired. Properly impressed, the landlady, in her turn, pointed it out to customers with great pride. But when one or two people offered to buy it, she grew alarmed lest it might be stolen, and, taking it down, had it framed and glazed, and hung within the house, where it might have been seen for years, and for aught I know may still be there.

Looking back across the vista of years, at this attractive little band of men, one tarries with feelings of admiration and tenderness. It was a brotherhood welded with the bonds of friendship and cemented by a mutual love of a common craft, which even as time slipped by and the meetings, for one reason and another, came to an end, were never wholly broken, until—"one by one crept silently to rest."

They had shared each other's joys and sorrows, as much as friends can do, had laughed at each other's whimsicalities, and had their disputes, just like any other normal mortals. They had jeered good-naturedly at each other's little failings, thus helping to overcome what might otherwise have become serious faults, and enjoyed each other's family yarns in the proper spirit.

The word "spirit" brings to my memory one of these yarns in which they particularly delighted, for I really believe it to be true.

A relative of the narrator of the story, resident in the Indies, after a life spent in accumulating much wealth, died somewhat suddenly of heat apoplexy. When his will was read instructions were discovered that unless his body was interred in England, his still attractive widow and pretty daughters, of whom I believe there were three, should reap no benefit from his sojourn in the land of gold and spices.

This was a blow, since in a climate where there is much heat, important functions such as funerals must for obvious reasons be carried out as soon as possible; and even if it had been feasible to have placed the body in a coffin on board ship, the sailors, martyrs of superstition, would have refused to have taken it on the long voyage to England in a sailing ship. The prospects of the family were therefore hanging in the balance, when a friend of fertile imagination had an inspiration, and

promised to see the matter through. Without informing the family of his plans, he had the body of the "dear departed" placed decorously in a large barrel of spirits labelled "RUM," which was deposited to await shipment in the lower storey of the house.

Now the ground floors of houses in this part of the world are chiefly used as dumping-grounds for unwanted articles, or as entrance halls from which ascend the staircases to the living-rooms above; and knowing that the newly made widow was lying prostrate with grief in the upper storey, the friend thought he had done rather well.

But unfortunately he had not reckoned with that healer "Time," nor for the fact that contrary winds delayed the ship which was to remove the poor gentleman to his allotted resting-place. Therefore several more days passed than were expected, during which the widow recovered sufficiently to take a little drive, and was descending the stairs, when her eye fell on a large barrel standing in the hall. She was about to inquire what it contained, when suddenly there was heard a mighty crack of timber, the top of the cask burst open, and there shot up before her horrified gaze the white face of her dead husband. The spirit in which he was being so carefully preserved had fermented with the more than usual heat, and burst its bounds.

The lady fainted, and for days lay prostrate

beneath the shock. In fact it was said she never really ever got over the effects.

Deeply repentant, the friend hastily set himself to work again at the funeral rites. This time he used a longer-matured spirit, and managed to get the camouflaged coffin without mishap on the next homeward-bound ship.

And all went well for some weeks—until the ship became becalmed. Then for days the vessel wallowed beneath a brazen sky with empty flapping sails ; and the crew roamed idly round the ship seeking for the proverbial mischief that a certain horned individual is always supposed to provide. They found it, reposing in the hold, in the shape of a large innocent-looking barrel with the magic word “ RUM ” inscribed on its portly sides.

This they joyfully tapped . . . and drank the contents, to the consternation of those in the know, but who dared not interfere in case of mutiny.

Having thoroughly enjoyed their refreshment (and certainly none could have grumbled at the want of “ body ” in it) the sailors left the cask standing on deck and turned in for the night. Then, with great secrecy, the—shall we call them “ mutes ? ”—poured brine through the bung hole and hoped for the best.

The “ best ” quickly came, for hardly had they finished their job than the ship was caught in

the tail-end of a typhoon which raked her from stem to stern, and incidentally swept the now pickled remains of the poor gentleman overboard.

There was a little trouble on the arrival of the boat in port with its spiritual cargo missing, but a sensible judge wisely ruled that since all that was humanly possible had been done, the rest was "the act of God."

With his camera David Wynfield filled the same rôle for the Clique as Fred Walker had done with his pencil. So accustomed are we to the beautiful photography of to-day that we can hardly realize what an able pioneer he was in the photographic work of his time. The camera was practically in its infancy, and its productions consisted chiefly of cartes-de-visite of ladies in stiff crinolines holding long-handled baskets of artificial flowers, and gentlemen with side-whiskers, standing by marble pillars, one peg-top leg twined elegantly round the other, and a thunderstorm venting its fury from behind a heavily tasselled curtain in the background. Working for his private satisfaction, Wynfield would take large portrait studies of friends whose faces interested him, invariably arranging some sort of head-dress or costume which he fancied suited the type of face. Thus in the portrait of John Everett Millais, he produced the head of a Dante; whilst from Frederick Walker's beautiful profile he evolved a young Florentine painter.



"YEAMES SINGS."
By Calderon.



"CALDERON SINGS."
By Yeames.

He photographed all the Clique in turn, and left hundreds of beautiful studies behind.

His method was to adjust the camera slightly out of focus, which softened and did away with the stereotyped hard look of the professional photographs of the day. He also gave his plates a special preparation.

He taught his friend Mrs. Cameron, of the Isle of Wight, how to take photographs in the same way, and her beautiful and well-known portraits of Lord Tennyson and others, were the result of his instruction.

A collection of these photographs of Wynfield's was presented by my uncle to the Academy library. One of the best is of John Phillip (who painted the beautiful portrait of Wynfield's great-uncle, Sir David Wilkie, now in the National Gallery).

Wynfield thought it would be a failure, for just as he took off the cap, Phillip burst out laughing, and called out :

“ I can see myself in the camera.” Naturally, Wynfield felt certain the plate was spoilt. Instead a most vivid delightful portrait was the result, and this, remember, at the period of time-exposures.

He took several portraits of my uncle, but I never thought them so effective as some of the others. Perhaps it was because, being very shortsighted, his eyes would take on the blurred

look of a near-sighted eye if bereft of glasses, for, as Wynfield always liked to take his portraits in costume, spectacles seemed rather out of place.

My uncle used to say it was rather an advantage for an artist to be shortsighted, for whereas other people had to half-close their eyes to soften effects, he always saw them so. His spectacles were indirectly, also, the means of saving his life. He and Mr. Hodgson had been skating one morning on the Regent's Park Lake, which in those days was very deep, when he lost his glasses. They searched in vain for them, but they had been swept away amongst the crowd of skaters; and as skating was no pleasure to my uncle without them, they decided to return home. On crossing the lake in the direction of Hanover Gate my uncle kicked something which skidded across the ice with a tinkling sound—it was his own pair of spectacles. Deciding, however, that it was not worth while putting their skates on again, they went home. Within an hour of their departure the ice suddenly broke beneath the enormous crowd on its surface, hundreds of skaters were submerged and a great number drowned—one of the most terrible skating fatalities on record. But for the loss of his glasses, Mr. Hodgson and my uncle would probably have been amongst the victims, for both were experts on skates and were generally in the centre of the lake.

RECOLLECTION VII

The picture of "The Stepping Stones"—"The French Ambassadors"—My uncle is made Associate of the Royal Academy—Sir Francis Grant, President—"The Dawn of the Reformation"—"Exorcising with Bell, Book, and Candle"—Hever Castle—The haunted Chamber—Henry VIII's week-ends—Fishing in the moat—A gallant rescue—House parties—Back to work—"Lady Jane Grey in the Tower"—"The Fugitive Jacobite"—"Alarming Footsteps"—"A Visit to the Haunted Chamber"—"The Battle of Edgehill"—"The Prisoner and his Guests"—"The Old Parishioner"—"A Rest by the Riverside"—"Pleading the Old Cause"—"The Morning Rehearsal"—"Path of Roses"—"Flowers for Hall and Bower"—"Pulpit decorating"—"The Christening"—"The Appeal to the Podesta"—"Pour les Pauvres"—"The Suitor"—Frescoes for the Albert Hall and South Kensington—Venetian pictures—"The Last bit of Scandal"—A love story—"Amy Robsart"—Portrait of Miss Nightingale—"And when did you last see your Father"—Studio Sundays—George Grossmith—Swinburne loses his hat—James Sant, R.A.—Sir Frederick Leighton entertains—"Octave" dinners—Dr. Porter Wornum.

THE first picture painted by my uncle after his marriage was entitled "The Stepping Stones." It depicted a lady in mediæval dress with a sugar-loaf hat, pointed shoes and ermine-trimmed robe, the train of which is being carried gingerly by an anxious old serving-man. She is crossing a stream over

stepping stones and in her arms carries a fluffy white dog, on whose face is an expression of keen appreciation as to the danger of his position. The background of the old city buildings is reflected in green and grey tones in the water. The figure of the man is most excellent, and the whole is bright and charming, although perhaps lacking the literary interest of his historical pictures. It is a trifle in the style of his "Staunch Friends."

In the following year, 1866, came the picture which gained him his admittance into the Royal Academy as an Associate. "The Ambassadors" is an extremely arresting work, showing a marked advance on his former style. It is strong and broad in treatment and gives ample promise of what was still to come. The subject is Queen Elizabeth receiving the French King's Ambassadors after the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. The mission was really meant to convey a request of her hand in marriage for their King, but their reception was such that the Ambassadors retired without broaching the subject. Decked in the full bravery of gaily coloured doublet and hose, they entered the Hall of Audience and discovered the whole Court dressed in mourning, awaiting them in utter silence. It is an intensely dramatic scene, treated with a master hand.

The subject was suggested to him by his mother, and when Frith, who was greatly struck

by the picture, was told of Mrs. Yeames's share in it, he remarked : " Your mother must be a clever woman ! "

This picture, although small, created a great sensation, and was bought from the studio before it appeared at the R.A. by Agnew, the picture dealer, who resold it to Mr. Coope, of Ind, Coope and Co., much to the disappointment of the Duke of Westminster, who had set his heart upon it.

A small sketch of it was bought by a certain Mr. Edwards for fifty pounds. After the deal he grumbled that he had paid too much and sent it to Christie's, where the Duke of Westminster bought it for £200, which the gentleman really did not deserve !

My uncle's A.R.A. diploma was signed by Sir Francis Grant, then President of the Royal Academy, a delightful personality, but looking more like a Scottish laird than the head of a great institute of art. His brother was the Sir Hope Grant of Indian Mutiny fame. He was a fine soldier, but at the same time extremely modest. When my uncle sat next to him at some dinner-party he would talk of nothing but his admiration of his brother for " being so clever " as to become President of the Academy ! Not one word as to his own achievements.

Sir Francis had not intended to take up Art as a profession, although he used to paint for amusement. Straitened circumstances, however,

caused him to start working seriously, and the story of his life at this point was not unlike that of Mario's. On coming of age he inherited ten thousand pounds (a larger spending sum in those days than it is now). This he promptly proceeded to dissipate amongst a large circle of friends, until the day arrived when he discovered he had come to the end of it !

Therefore the need to earn his living presented itself to him. But how to begin ? He hit upon an idea !

He invited all the friends who had helped him so kindly to squander his patrimony to a grand dinner-party, at which they all made exceeding merry, toasting their host lustily at the end.

He rose to reply. First he thanked them for their good-fellowship and kind wishes, and then he told them that he regretted to inform them that this would have to be the last dinner he would be able to give them, as he had spent his last penny upon it. In future he would have to earn his living and had determined to do so by his brush. In the past he had done his best to make them happy ; perhaps in the future some of them might give him a helping hand. He could paint portraits : would be glad of any orders and had therefore brought a few specimens of his work to show them.

Whereupon the funkeys threw open the doors of the next room, disclosing a number of pictures

which he had painted in his leisure moments. Several of his guests gave orders, and thus began Sir Francis Grant's artistic career.

Furthermore, he eloped with a charming young lady of good family, whose relatives had opposed the match on the ground of his poverty. Not so many years later he was elected President and received his knighthood.

My uncle's next picture, in 1867, was "The Dawn of the Reformation." The subject is Wycliffe bidding god-speed to his young missionaries.

"After that Wycliffe had finished the translation of the Bible, he called together the poor priests his disciples, and giving them copies, bade them make known the gospel throughout the land."

A fine picture in a simple treatment.

It was bought by Graves, the engraver, and eventually passed into the hands of Bishop Colenso and was sent to the Cape.

A large water-colour named "Exorcising with Bell, Book, and Candle" was also exhibited this year. It is of exquisite colour and composition, the subject being a monk receiving chastisement at the hands of another, whilst a mitred ex-abbot, seated enthroned amidst prostrate and kneeling monks, reads from a great tome on his knees. These two pictures, totally dissimilar in composition, subject, treatment, and even medium, illustrate my uncle's great versatility; and

both were produced the same year. The latter is now in the South Kensington Museum.

In 1867 my uncle and aunt formed a party with Mr. and Mrs. Calderon and their young family and rented Hever Castle. They spent a most enjoyable summer. It was a charming old place, as yet unrestored, full of the romance of tradition, with its hoary old walls, its moat, its empty echoing passages and haunted chambers—for Anne Boleyn was supposed to flit wailing down the Long Gallery, holding her pretty head in her hands. Without doubt the Long Gallery was where she had been wont to sit in happier times, pillowing that luckless head on the shoulder of her future executioner. For jovial Henry had been in the habit of spending his “week-ends” at a neighbouring house for the purpose of “urging” (if that had been necessary!) his suit.

My aunt’s bedroom was at the end of this gallery, and she has admitted to me that she really did not quite care for crossing it alone at night with a single guttering candle. Not that she ever saw the poor decapitated lady, but she used to hear very “odd” noises emanating from the yellow room, reputed to have once been Anne Boleyn’s. Electric light, and all the latest labour-saving devices have no doubt completely checked all poor Anne’s whilom activities by now.

My uncle visualized the ghost later in a picture called “The Haunted Chamber,” in



“THE DEATH OF AMY ROBSART.”

*From the painting by William F. Yeames, R.A., in the Tate Gallery.
Reproduced by kind permission.*

which two frightened ladies are peeping round the curtains of a gloomy four-poster bed, while two equally terrified mice are scampering away from the other side of the bed.

There was another staircase which gave access to her room through the kitchen, but my aunt seldom used it, as that would have been an acknowledgement of fear. One day, however, on ascending this staircase in broad daylight she noticed unusual marks of water spilt on each step. She had a premonition that something must have happened, and she was right ; for my uncle had walked accidentally into the moat.

A sketch drawn by Philip Hermogenes Calderon, R.A., depicts the rescue, accomplished by himself and George Adolphus Storey. Two fine legs sticking out of the water denote where my uncle is immersed and a pair of spectacles carefully placed on the bank show the thoughtful way they must have been removed before the accident occurred.

The time passed very happily in country walks, sketching, and fishing in the moat. The fishing was rough, only perch, carp, and jack, but it provided a good deal of amusement, although in spite of their best efforts in the culinary line none of the catch could be rendered palatable. The Vicar had assured them that jack could be made most delicious if prepared from a special recipe of his, which he kindly presented to them.

But it was of no avail, and as the Vicar persisted in recommending it, every jack caught was promptly despatched to the Vicarage. One imagines the Vicar must have regretted the day he ever mentioned the fact. For it is possible to have too much of a good thing, whether joke or jack.

Later David Wynfield and his mother joined the party, and as there was ample room in the old castle, the tenancy of it made a good opportunity for entertaining, and many were the gay little parties which took place within its walls.

Of course, the Clique were continually there, and many another from the world of Art and Letters, including the two *Punch* men, its Editor, Burnand, and Du Maurier. The former embodied Hever in his *Happy Thoughts*. The old lady he mentions, who at a certain time at night would rise, remarking when she began to get sleepy, "Now I think it is time to go to Bedfordshire," was Mrs. Winfield.

Hodgson was passionately fond of fishing and spent the whole of one day endeavouring to catch a carp. But having no success, and tired out with his efforts, he returned to town, and had the terrible dream of which he made a sketch which he sent to his hosts.

Before finally leaving for town, the tenants of Hever gave a luncheon-party—in the preparation of which they nearly burnt down the castle! As it was growing chilly they decided that a

cheerful fire kindled in the big fireplace in the hall would be very welcome and had it lit. But either a great accumulation of soot or a jackdaw's nest caught fire, for in a minute a solid sheet of flame was roaring up the wide old chimney.

The men of the party were all out of doors, and for a few minutes consternation reigned. Then my aunt, suddenly recollecting some old instructions as to what to do in such an emergency, darted up the back stairs, and seizing her best new blankets from her bed, stuffed them up the aperture. At that moment the gardener rushed in, and not knowing what had just been done, fired his gun up the chimney, bringing down mountains of soot and the blankets riddled with holes.

Although she probably saved Hever, my aunt never got over the loss of those blankets.

The men of the party, returning with their guests across the drawbridge, suddenly heard the report of firearms. Heavens ! What horrible tragedy had occurred ? Headlong they dashed in together, only to find the heroic work accomplished, and Hever, albeit a trifle smutty, intact.

Then back to old St. John's Wood, and work ; for next year's pictures had to be begun ; and in 1868 my uncle sent two pictures to the Academy. One was "The Chimney Corner," painted in the old kitchen at Hever. It showed a pretty little fair-haired boy rolled in blankets (painfully

reminiscent for my aunt !) sitting in a roomy old ingle-nook, with the country doctor standing beside him. The other was a historical subject, "Lady Jane Grey in the Tower." Feckenham, the Queen's Chaplain, is shown engaging her in a learned disputation, "from which he was obliged to retire discomfited." The picture illustrates the moment when Feckenham is endeavouring to entrap the unfortunate little Lady Jane Grey into an admission of weakness in her faith.

In 1869 there came another evidence of Hever in "The Fugitive Jacobites" with, as was so often the case in my uncle's work, a whole story to be read on the canvas. Here one sees a large open fireplace up which a Jacobite is disappearing in an endeavour to reach the "priest hole" in its recesses, whilst the family retainer kindles a fire on the stones below. The pretty figure of a young girl in a sac dress is seen peering anxiously out of the window.

Another story appears in "Alarming Foot-steps." A lovers' meeting is taking place at a window, and the pair are startled by the sounds of approaching footsteps. Through an open door the artist has let one into the secret—a tiny child coming from the staircase.

In 1870 "Maundy Thursday" was painted, which, as its name infers, shows :

"the noble mistress, assisted by her handmaidens, keeps pious observances, washing the feet of poor women."

This picture is rich in colour and quality of light and shade. The ladies of the castle, in all the elegance of rich flowing robes and mediæval headdresses, contrast strongly with the row of poorly clad old women seated on a long bench, whilst great baskets of bread are being carried in for distribution.

Two other pictures appeared the same year, “A Visit to the Haunted Chamber” (mentioned before) and “Love’s Young Dream,” a small picture of a pair of young lovers.

Then in 1871 came a fine picture, “The Battle of Edgehill.” The subject of this was a fact not generally mentioned in history books, namely, that the young sons of Charles I were actually watching the battle of Edgehill from the comparative safety of a depression in a meadow. Their tutor, Dr. Harvey, the famous discoverer of the theory of the circulation of the blood, sat below on a fallen tree-trunk, absorbed in a book, and was only awakened to their danger when the bullets began to whizz past them !

This picture has been more than once used as a frontispiece to medical books.

“The Prisoner and his Guests,” a smaller picture, was also painted this year. It is full of the tender feeling that several of his pictures possess. A young prisoner in a cell is sharing his crust of bread with some pigeons who have flown in through the barred window above his head.

“A Rest by the Riverside” is a delightfully sunny picture of Hambledon Lock, on the Thames. This one and “The Old Parishioner” were painted in 1872, and in 1873 came two small pictures, “Pleading the Old Cause” and the “Morning Rehearsal”; also a large one of an old-fashioned village wedding called “The Path of Roses.”

In 1874 there came four small pictures: “Flowers for Hall and Bower,” being the interior of Cotehele House; “Pulpit Decorations for the Harvest Home,” a painting of Tonge Church; “The Christening,” and “The Appeal to the Podesta,” which shows the courtyard of the Podesta’s palace, with a great flight of stone steps down which the Podesta himself is descending. Three tiny children are kneeling before him in supplication, evidently praying for the life of their father. The little figures have again that delightful and characteristic tenderness in treatment.

A fine picture entitled “Pour les Pauvres” appeared the following year. It represents the snow-covered courtyard of an old farmhouse at the door of which two nuns with a hand sledge are receiving broken food from the housewife.

Very different from this type of picture, and yet of the same year, was a dainty little picture of a page dressed in white satin and standing at a door holding a bouquet behind his back. It is called “The Suitor,” illustrating the line:

“Many a suitor came to her door.”

This was bought by Thomas Agnew, who was so delighted with it that he gave my uncle a commission for five more pictures of the same sort, but this was one thing my uncle never could do,—work to order. It was difficult enough for him to paint a portrait he was not interested in, but a set piece of work was out of the question, so Mr. Agnew had to content himself with only the one.

Commissions such as the fresco round the outside of the Albert Hall, and the figures in mosaic of Holbein and Torrigiano for the big hall of the Kensington Museum, were of course a different matter.

The work of the fresco on the outside of the Albert Hall was divided amongst several artists, each doing a part, but it is unsatisfactory for all concerned, as it is at such a height that it is impossible to examine it.

The work at South Kensington was also shared with other eminent artists, although not all the figures are in mosaic. Most people are acquainted with the beautiful King Henry VII's chapel at Westminster, but few know that it was designed and built by the Italian Torrigiano, and that we owe this exquisite building to the accident of a broken nose. For Torrigiano, having damaged that portion of Michael Angelo's anatomy in a quarrel, was exiled from his country by its infuriated authorities, for Michael Angelo was the idol of the people. The loss to Italy was

England's gain, for he fled to our shores and found work and shelter.

In 1874 my uncle and aunt spent some time in Venice, taking part of a palazza on the Grand Canal. The results of this visit were several Venetian pictures : "La Contatinella," "Campo die SS. Apostoli, Venice," in 1876 "La Bigolante" (his diploma picture) in 1879, and "Dolce far Niente" in 1881.

In 1876 came a delightful picture named "The Last Bit of Scandal." We see a rosy dawn breaking over an old Georgian street of cobbled stones flanked by red bricked walls. Two elegant sedan chairs have stopped and from their raised roofs a *poudré* lady and gentleman are eagerly recounting to each other the latest tit-bit of gossip.

It was purchased by Mr. Schwabe, a great picture lover. For some years it was hung in his house (more a picture gallery than a house) in Palace Gardens, but was eventually transferred with the rest of his collection as a gift to Hamburg, the town of his birth. About which more anon.

Mr. Schwabe was an old friend of my uncle's, and although a native of Hamburg, he lived entirely in England. He married an English lady and used the money he made both well and kindly in the land of his adoption. Many a struggling artist and musician (for he was

passionately fond of music as well as painting, and was an excellent judge of both) has had cause to bless his name.

He used to send me toffee; special Everton toffee, ordered expressly from Everton itself. The parcel would be wrapped in brown paper and carried with immense dignity by a magnificent footman from the carriage into Acomb Lodge. Little acts of kindness; but typical of the giver, for if it was toffee for me, it was probably other things for other people. Outside the matter of toffee Mrs. Schwabe endeared herself to me (such is romantic girlhood) by telling me how she first met her husband. I do not know whether it was the romance of the whole thing, which included a real old-fashioned coach, or because Mrs. Schwabe was so tall and dignified, and Mr. Schwabe so small and thin, with his big nose and black skull-cap,—but the story I treasured was that when Mrs. Schwabe, or rather Miss Dugdale, was young, she happened to be taking a journey in a coach which was very crowded and uncomfortable. Seated next to her was a strange young man. Of course, neither spoke to the other. It must have been a long journey, for by night she became so tired that she fell asleep, and only awoke next morning, much refreshed, to find her head pillowled on the shoulder of the strange young man beside her, who had remained motionless the whole night

through so as to enable her to repose in comfort. His kindness impressed her so much that a friendship was begun which ended in matrimony.

Mr. Schwabe was a very shrewd man, one of the originators, I believe, of the White Star Line and the founder of the great shipbuilding works of Harland and Wolff. He used to tell my uncle he had made a combination of brains and money when he formed that partnership.

His great hobby was pictures, and he at last collected so many that he told me he really had to stop buying them because he had had to put the last one under a bed, as there was not a spare bit of wall left in the house ! His taste was excellent, and he never bought what was in fashion, but what he saw was really good, and therefore appealed to him personally ; for he lived *with* his pictures, and positively loved them. When his collection went to Hamburg, he had engravings of them hung in their places.

In 1877 came a small picture which unfortunately I cannot trace, but which was exhibited at the Academy, entitled "Waking . . . to the Light of Common Day," and in the same year came his great,—perhaps his greatest picture, "Amy Robsart." It created an immense sensation and was certainly the most popular picture of that year's Academy. Intensely arresting as to subject, and a masterpiece of foreshortening. The following letterpress describes it :

“ Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, being the great favourite of Queen Elizabeth, it was thought she would have made him her husband ; to the end, to free himself from all obstacles, he had his wife Amy Robsart conveyed to the solitary house of Cumnor Hall in Berkshire, inhabited by Anthony Forster, his servant. This same Forster, in compliance with what he well knew to be the Earl’s wishes, came with others in the dead of night to the lady’s bedchamber, stifled her in bed, and flung her down stairs, thereby believing the world would have thought it a mischance and so blinded their villainy ; and the morning after, with the purpose that others should know of her end, did Forster on pretence of carrying out some behest of the Countess, bring a servant to the spot where the poor lady’s body lay at the foot of the stairs.”

AUBREY.

This picture was purchased for £1000 by the President and Council of the Royal Academy under the terms of the Chantrey Bequest, and was, I believe, among the first works selected. It now hangs in the Tate Gallery.

In 1877 my uncle also exhibited a portrait study called “ The Fair Royalist,” and a portrait in pastel of Florence, daughter of Colonel Nightingale.

In the following year my uncle painted a picture which, if applications for reproduction rights count for anything, proved the most popular of all his works. For it has been said that “ And when did you last see your Father ? ” has been reproduced more than any other modern picture.

So well-known is this picture that the mere mention of the little fair-haired Cavalier boy, standing on a footstool and being interrogated by the stern Roundheads, with his little weeping sister in the charge of a huge trooper, and the anxious mother in the background, will bring the picture to the minds of most. It is a good specimen of what I call my uncle's "arresting" pictures. He had a wonderful knack of choosing dramatic incidents, which left one wondering what was coming. As someone once remarked: "You wanted to wait and see what was going to happen next."

This picture was purchased by the Walker Art Gallery at Liverpool. My uncle used to enjoy telling a story of an intelligent plumber we used to employ who, on seeing an engraving of the picture hanging in our hall, exclaimed:

"Oh, I know that picture quite well, I saw it in the Liverpool Art Gallery. It is called 'And does your Mother know you're out,'" and then he added: "I saw another of Mr. Yeames's at Leeds, and so now I never go to a gallery of pictures without asking where there is one by Mr. Yeames, and there is nearly always one."

The authorities at Liverpool lent this picture for a Winter Exhibition at the Royal Academy some years ago, and everyone was struck by the wonderful brilliancy of the colours, in strong contrast to some of the other exhibits of the



' AND WHEN DID YOU LAST SEE YOUR FATHER ? "

From the painting by William F. Yeames, R.A., in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Reproduced by kind permission.

same period, which had badly faded. My uncle had always been extremely particular as to his paints. If he had been able, he would have liked to have ground and prepared his own colours, as the old painters had done. For during his sojourn in Italy he had not only been a keen student of the technique of the old Masters, but also of their methods and materials. He would scoff good-naturedly at dabblers who talked learnedly on mediums, gums, varnishes, and so forth, as a reason for what had merely been good honest work, and would quote the well-known little anecdote, ascribed, I believe, to Opie, of the amateur who enquired of the artist what he mixed his paints with, and received the gruff reply : “ Brains, sir, brains ! ”

It is always interesting to know what it is that prompts an artist, writer, or composer to produce any particular piece of work, and I must confess to being quite ignorant of the thought which inspired the “ When did you last see your Father ? ” picture. Lately, however, I received a letter from Mr. Quigley, Curator of the Walker Art Gallery, in which he very kindly enlightened me.

He wrote : “ It may interest you to know that we wrote at one time to Mr. Yeames to ascertain whether the picture illustrated an actual historical incident, and his answer was :

‘ I had, at the time I painted the picture,

living in my house a nephew of an innocent and truthful disposition, and it occurred to me to represent him in a situation where the child's outspokenness and unconsciousness would lead to disastrous consequences, and a scene in a country house occupied by Puritans during the Rebellion in England suited my purpose.””

The little boy in blue in the picture was an excellent portrait of my little brother, and we were extremely proud of standing as the models for the two children. It was the first time we had done so, although by no means the last ; for after these two kind relatives had taken us to live with them at Acomb Lodge, we were often used for little spells of sittings, which we thoroughly enjoyed, and we were tremendously proud of the honour. For besides the glory of seeing ourselves in the R.A., there was the feeling of superiority derived from being called out of the schoolroom and from having Uncle Will entirely to ourselves. He had the power of robbing every minute of dullness, and as a final reward we were allowed to rummage in the waste-paper basket for the lovely bits of silver foil which always wrapped the particular Virginian tobacco he smoked, and which for some mysterious reason was much cherished by us.

My brother later appeared in the “ Prince Arthur and Hubert ” picture, and as one of the “ Middies ” in “ Prisoners of War.” My sister,

too, was very pretty and used often to appear on my uncle's canvases. She posed for the "Lady Mary Wortley Montagu" in the "Toast of the Kit-Cat Club," and was also the little girl in the foreground of "Prisoners of War," and in later years, the lady in "Defendant and Council."

My sister and I once sat in combination for the whole family of girls in a picture my uncle was doing for the *Graphic* Christmas Number, named, "Mamma's Christmas Present," or "A Boy at Last." This work showed a group of girls crowding round a nurse who holds a baby in her arms. As a family resemblance was required, and there were only two of us, he painted "bits" of us both into the faces and figures of the other five or six girls. And much the same thing was done in "Working the Royal Standard."

The studio Sundays of those days were bright and informal affairs: friends would drop in, look at the pictures, and then stroll into the drawing-room for tea. I know I used to enjoy them thoroughly, for my uncle would always allow me to stay in the studio and receive the guests with him, and I met many interesting people in consequence.

It was on one of these Sundays that I first met George Grossmith. He told me he never could get the public to take him seriously. It appeared that there was a really nice little bit of pathos

which he had worked up in the *Yeoman of the Guard* in his song “I have a song to sing, O !” But the gallery wouldn’t have it at any price. They had paid to see Grossmith, the funny man, and laughed all through. A continental public would not have made that mistake. In *Ruddigore* he had to throw himself down on the steps below the family portraits, and the night we were there, he reeled to the spot and threw himself down with such extraordinarily well-acted abandonment that the audience was delighted and applauded vociferously. The curtain went up, but he did not answer the call, and lay where he was. Next day we heard he was seriously ill with inflammation of the lungs ; and he told me after that he had been feeling so ill that he simply did not know how he got through the evening.

Art was fashionable in those days, as du Maurier’s pictures in *Punch* testify ; and gradually the pleasant little sociable Sundays developed into unwieldy affairs, with cards sent out for admittance ; and rows of grand carriages, somewhat unusual affairs in unpretentious little St. John’s Wood, would line up its roads. Smartly dressed people would emerge from them, drift into the studios, gossip for a few minutes, and then drift out into the next, which was generally not far to go, as the members of the Clique all lived almost within a stone’s throw

of each other, and later other artists came to settle in the neighbourhood. Mr. and Mrs. George Leslie and their young family lived four doors from Acomb Lodge; and David Wynfield and his mother a few steps further. The next door but one at Weston Lodge resided Mr. and Mrs. Calderon with their nice big family. Some years later Andrew Gow and his gifted sister Mary took the intermediate house. The Hodgsons eventually left Hill Road (where I believe the studio so devotedly decorated by members of the Clique is still in existence) and took a house in the Circus Road, opposite the Hugh Armsteads. Stacy Marks lived in Hamilton Terrace; and, as I have mentioned before, Henry Davis occupied Sir Edwin Landseer's house. The Armitages lived for many years in the Hall Road, and Alma Tadema built his wonderful house (with the help of young Alfred Calderon, Philip Calderon's eldest son, who was training as an architect) in the upper part of Grove End Road. John MacWhirter had built a house for himself in Abbey Road; whilst in the Finchley Road lived the Briton Rivieres and the Burgesses.

The Arts Club was started, I believe, in the sixties, and my uncle, in company with the rest of the Clique, was one of its original members.

He was always very fond of dropping in when he could, meeting old friends and making the

acquaintance of new ones, for it certainly boasted the most interesting members of any club of that period. My aunt quite approved of this little habit of his ; for being very shy with strangers, she disliked social functions, but much enjoyed, in the seclusion of her own home, hearing about the people my uncle came across.

Swinburne, who was adored by a certain coterie at that time, was a member, and I have often wondered what his admirers would have thought could they but have witnessed a certain little scene once enacted by their idol at the Club. For, having dined well but not too wisely at some festive board, Swinburne ordered his cabby to drive him to the Arts Club and, on the way, unfortunately lost his hat, or threw it overboard. When he arrived at the Club he ordered himself another "toast" or two, so that when the time for departure arrived, and he went to look for his hat amongst those hanging in the cloak-room, he could not find it. He began to try each one on in turn. No luck, none fitted, and he became more and more annoyed. However, he was not to be beaten, so coming to the end of the line he began all over again, and as each displeased him, he took it off and jumped on it, to the amazement of Lord Leighton, who happened to enter the room at that psychological moment and caught him at it !

There was a pretty general feeling amongst the owners of the hats that he should tender his resignation from membership, but "poetic licence" was pleaded and he was permitted to remain, though his friend Morris was, I believe, given a hint that it was not to happen again.

Another old friend of my uncle's was James Sant, R.A., who held the post of "Principal Painter in Ordinary to Her Majesty"; though, I believe, he only painted one portrait of Queen Victoria, as the Queen objected to the Crown jewels being painted in any but minute detail, and this Sant said was foreign to his style of painting. However, he painted several of the other members of the Royal family who were not so particular as to their jewellery.

He and Mrs. Sant were most hospitable and gave delightful little dinners to members of the Academy at their very charming house in Lancaster Gate.

Lord Leighton used also to entertain a good deal, but although a perfect host when it came to a Royal Academy function, his private parties did not appear to have been particularly interesting, being rather stiff affairs, for Lord Leighton never forgot his position as President. The only one which seems to have left any particular impression on my uncle's mind was a dinner given as a sort of housewarming on the completion of Leighton House. After they had

dined, the guests adjourned to admire the beautiful Eastern Court, and Mr. X—, R.A., with his eyes fixed upon the wonderful ceiling, walked into the pool of water which in Oriental style decorated the centre of the tessellated pavement. He appears to have been so annoyed that even the gift of a new pair of socks, the property of Lord Leighton himself, failed to pacify him.

Flowers in pots were afterwards placed round the margin of the fountain and, if they did detract a little from the atmosphere of the Orient, at least prevented further mishaps.

Lord Leighton had a perfect passion for form and colour; unique old blue tiles lined the walls of this wonderful reproduction of an Eastern interior, whilst a magnificent stuffed peacock stood on the pedestal at the foot of the stairs. Superstitious folk might well have pointed to this bird, for poor Lord Leighton did not live long to enjoy his beautiful home.

The dinner parties that perhaps my uncle enjoyed as well as any, were those given by Sir Henry Thompson, the famous surgeon. He was a man of many parts and, like so many doctors, was a great admirer of Art and artists. He was an excellent host, and his "octave" dinners, to which he never invited more than eight guests, which he said was the perfect number, were justly famous. For the guests were sure of a perfectly cooked repast and intelligently chosen

and congenial company—and therefore, a delightful evening.

He was greatly in favour of carefully prepared food, and would wax wroth over the way English cooks spoilt English food (the best food in the world) because they seemed to think it was so good that it did not matter how it was prepared. He invented, I believe, a special arrangement for cooking asparagus, and my uncle said that certainly at his table one was able to eat and enjoy the whole of the vegetable, leaving no stalks on one's plate.

My uncle was always greatly struck by the close alliance between the practice of medicine and that of Art and with the fact that so many doctors could have made fine painters.

Victor Horsley, son of his old friend the Royal Academician (known amongst his friends as “Old Clothes Horsley” in consequence of his heading a campaign against the predominance of nude pictures at the R.A.) was a case in point. He could have taken up either path in life, but as he said there was no money in Art, he chose that of medicine, in which he became famous.

Our own medical man, the late Dr. Porter Wornum, a son of the Keeper of the National Gallery, was another. An artist to the finger-tips, and yet one of the most understanding men of his profession I have met. A student of human nature, he had an immense belief in the power of

mind over matter, and, if he could, would try to make a patient take up a pursuit rather than a medicine bottle. Equally was he aware of the danger of a dominant idea, and how easily it could take the bit between its teeth. He told my uncle an amusing story of a certain lady patient of his who declared she could not rise from her bed. Equally certain was Dr. Wornum that she could. So after he had tried every form of persuasion, he arranged his call so that it should coincide with the time when, arrayed in the full war-paint of curl papers, etc., she was preparing for the night. Seating himself beside the bed, he began gently to push the lighted candle on the table closer and closer towards her head, till suddenly one of the screws of paper caught alight. In an instant she had leapt out of bed, and was racing for the door. She was furiously angry when she learnt the truth, and, added Dr. Wornum sadly, "I have never been called in again."

He told my uncle about another case of his. He had arrived at our house one morning looking rather worried. It appeared he had had in his care for some time past a patient addicted to drugs, whom, at his own request, he was trying to cure. The case was a difficult one, as the man's physical health had suffered very seriously. Dr. Wornum had commenced by giving him the usual injections of his drug, and the patient,

knowing he was taking it, experienced the same conditions as he had always done when taking it himself. Then, without informing him, he began substituting water in place of the drug until the man was receiving injections of no medicinal value whatever. But the warped mind had taken such control of the body that, curiously enough, thinking he was taking the drug, the patient's craving was as satisfied as though he had actually taken it. And here arose the difficult question as to how it would affect him physically when he realized he was not taking any. Would the same results occur (which might be very critical, owing to his poor state of health) as though the drug itself had been suddenly stopped? So, as a preliminary course, Dr. Wornum had decided to send him for a sea voyage in charge of an attendant, hoping that his system, fortified by health, would be strong enough on his return to stand the joyful news of his cure. But that morning he had received the sad news that he had contracted pneumonia on the journey and died. Dr. Wornum was much distressed, particularly as the attendant had not dared to take upon himself to tell him he was cured of his terrible habit. He felt sure the poor fellow would have died so much happier.

RECOLLECTION VIII

My uncle elected full Academician—Sir Frederick Leighton—His prophetic drawing—Royalty at the R.A.—Sir Frederick goes to Scotland—“La Bigolante”—“The Finishing Touch”—Entertainments at Moray Lodge—George Grossmith and Corney Grain perform—du Maurier acts—Mrs. Arthur Lewis—“Round the Mulberry Bush”—“The March Past”—“Prince Arthur and Hubert”—“Tender Thoughts”—“The Toast of the Kit-Cat Club”—Portrait of Edward Moberly, Esq.—“Toots, Daughter of Frederick May, Esq.”—Posthumous portraits—“Prisoners of War”—“Dessert”—“Ford’s Hospital”—“A Catastrophe”—Mr. Calderon and my uncle go to Hamburg—“The Christ-Bearer”—“Working the Royal Standard”—“Portrait of Mrs. Berthold Smith”—Pencillings by R.A.’s—Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, R.A.

IN 1878 my uncle was elected a full Academician.

These, and the following years, were great ones for Burlington House. Sir Francis Grant had toned up the Academy until it had become a most important and polished institution. Its members were men of talent and education, and its schools stood high in the world of Art. At his death a fitting successor in the person of Sir Frederick Leighton stepped into his place. In fact, the Academy at that time was worthy of its prefix “Royal.”

Sir Frederick Leighton's family came from the professional classes. His grandfather had been a doctor of some repute in St. Petersburg, and his father was in the office of a relative of ours in that city.

My grandmother remembered him as a very shy youth who would occasionally come up to the drawing-room and timidly partake of tea, sitting on the very edge of his chair with his hat placed carefully beneath it.

He was not, however, a very satisfactory clerk, and my grandmother suggested to his father that the boy should try some other profession. So he finally became a doctor; but not a very satisfactory doctor either as far as operations were concerned, for he invariably fainted at the sight of blood. He settled down as a country practitioner in Greenford, Middlesex. Greenford in those days was, what its name infers, in the depths of the country, a little rural place with no pretensions, a good long drive from London.

From his earliest youth the young Leighton was passionately fond of drawing, and an old friend of my uncle's told him a good story about the future President as a boy. She happened to be staying in the house, when a gentleman whom the boy particularly disliked came to visit them, and to whom, I regret to say, he was extremely rude. His parents thereupon, being properly shocked, locked him in a room in solitary

confinement. Unrepentant, he explained through his prison door to his friend that he did not mind how long they kept him locked up if only she would smuggle him in a pencil and piece of paper, which of course she did. When he was liberated, he produced, perfectly unabashed, an excellent portrait of his enemy adorned with donkey's ears, and signed : "Frederick Leighton, President of the Royal Academy." A truly prophetic document.

Sir Frederick's reign was remarkable not only from an artistic, but also from a social point of view. Invitations for the Academy banquets, soirées, and private views were eagerly sought after. One could hardly be counted as a celebrity if one had not been seen at an R.A. function.

Being a good linguist my uncle was generally given the foreign guests to entertain, and would occasionally escort the members of our own Royal family. Particularly did he enjoy showing the pictures to the late Queen Alexandra, for whom he had the greatest respect and admiration. He always mentioned her as being especially gracious and charming.

In those days our present King was, of course, a young man, and he confided to my uncle one day that he would rather enjoy coming to the Academy banquets if only they would leave out the speeches and not put him near his uncles, as he saw enough of them at home. This being

reported to headquarters, the speeches were cut out the following year. But, curiously enough, the dinners proved so dull without them that they had to be restarted. I do not know what steps were taken with regard to the uncles.

But the member of the Royal family who seemed most to enjoy the R.A. hospitality, and was perhaps my uncle's favourite, was the late Duke of Teck. A cheerful and friendly personality, he told my uncle he enjoyed a good banquet, as he never seemed to get anything but cold mutton at home.

One day, meeting my uncle in the galleries, he seized him by the arm and, crying, "Come and see my portrait," dragged him in front of Herkomer's "Burgomaster."

"Now look," he cried triumphantly, "isn't that exactly like me?"

On another occasion, he took Mr. Calderon to look at Thorncroft's nude figure of "The Fencer," a man of super type.

"Now that," he said, "is supposed to represent the perfect figure of a man, but I don't look like that when I come out of my bath in the morning. And yet," he added thoughtfully, "it is supposed to be a perfect man."

Sir Frederick Leighton invariably went either to Greece or Rome for his holidays, affirming that only there could real beauty be found. This Mr. Hodgson hotly contested, telling him he

could find it nearer home, and few places could beat the west coast of Scotland, where his brother-in-law, Sir Thomas Riddell, owned a fine estate, and would no doubt be very pleased to see him and show him the beautiful scenery.

The invitation being accepted, Sir Frederick travelled north. On his arrival, Sir Thomas directed a certain gillie who had been in the habit of accompanying Mr. Hodgson about the country side during the latter's visits, to show Sir Frederick the places which had chiefly attracted Mr. Hodgson. He naturally concluded that artistic tastes would coincide, and the gillie would be a better guide than himself under the circumstances.

They started briskly, the gillie beguiling the way with eulogies on "oor Mister Hodgson," to which Sir Frederick gracefully assented.

A good walk brought them to the banks of a river.

"This," explained the gillie impressively, "is where 'oor Mister Hodgson caught an 'unco' fine fush."

Sir Frederick was politely interested, and having gazed awhile at the historic spot, whilst the gillie discoursed in detail as to how the deed had been done, they moved on. After stumbling for some time over loose river stones and slippery banks, the guide paused again, and, pointing sadly to a deep silent pool, remarked :

“ And this is where 'oor Mister Hodgson lost a graun' saumon.”

This was no doubt highly reprehensible on the part of “ 'oor Mister Hodgson,” but Sir Frederick intimated he had really come to see Highland scenery, not the localities of piscatorial adventures.

“ Are there any roads on the estate, and where do they lead ? ” he enquired.

The gillie was all intelligence and strode up what was evidently an exceedingly rough goat track. Unaccustomed as Sir Frederick was to anything little more arduous in the way of exercise than a stroll from Holland Park to Piccadilly, he found it rather trying, but in joyous anticipation of the scenic reward awaiting him, he nobly persevered and eventually they entered a mountain gorge.

“ Ye were speekin' aboot a road. This is aye the one 'oor Mister would tak' when he gae'd to the toun for his baccy.”

Sir Frederick swallowed his feelings. Then he had an inspiration.

“ Perhaps you could show me where Mr. Hodgson used to stop to look at the view ? ”

The gillie nodded, and began to scale the almost precipitous mountain side. Still aglow with his chase after beauty, albeit somewhat footsore, Sir Frederick painfully followed, till, wreathed in fleecy clouds, they paused on the summit of a mountain.

“ And this is whaur’ ‘oor Mister Hodgson wud sit and smoke his pipe, and stare at the Loch awa’ doon.”

Sir Frederick gazed gloomily into the blank wall of mist before him, and turned away. He felt he was getting morally and physically tired of “ ‘oor Mister Hodgson.”

But not so the gillie, in whom memory had awakened the demon of reminiscence ; and Sir Frederick caught the words floating from the auburn beard beside him :

“ And when there was owre muckle sun for the fush, ‘oor Mister Hodgson wud tak oot a wee box o’ colours . . .”

“ Ah ! that’s it ! That’s it ! ” cried Sir Frederick. “ Show me where he used to paint his pictures.”

“ Och ! Aye ! He did gran’ paintin’ did ‘oor Mister Hodgson. I ken weel ye’d have liked fine to ha’ seen hoo he made they wee bit picters. There war some stanes, noo, away yonder, I’ll be aboot showin’ ye . . .” and with kilts swinging, the Highlander strode with giant strides over rocks and heather, till he halted on the top of a mossy boulder. Half dead with fatigue, Sir Frederick reached his side.

“ I mind it was the simmer twa years ago, and ‘oor Mister Hodgson had brokken his rod and could ‘nae gae efter the fush, so he brocht oot a wee bit stool on three legs and his box o’ colours,

and sitting away' doon in that howe yon," pointing to a spot several hundred feet below, "did a gran' picter o' them. . . . I'll just be taking' ye awa' doon . . ."

"Which is the quickest way back to the house?" enquired Sir Frederick, registering a vow of returning immediately to London, and incidentally putting himself as far as possible from the maddening activities of "'oor Mister Hodgson."

Curiously enough, Lord Leighton's successor to the Presidentship was a man who nurtured the same love for Scotland as did "'oor Mister Hodgson." This was John Everett Millais, who would thoroughly have appreciated the gillie's feelings as to the lost "saumon," for he told my uncle he was more proud of an immense salmon, a thirty or forty pounder, he had once landed under very difficult conditions, than of any of his pictures.

In 1879 my uncle painted his diploma picture, "La Bigolante," the outcome of his last visit to Italy. A Venetian water-carrier is seen standing by a well with her brass water-pots. The colouring is beautiful, a soft golden warmth pervading the painting. My uncle was unusually fond of this picture, and, I remember, took immense pains with the posing of "La Bigolante," even to modelling a figure in wax to work from.

In 1880 he produced "The Finishing Touch," the scene of an amateur Green Room. This was an attractive picture, and painted with a light touch suitable to the subject,—a lady in a sac gown and picture hat having her face made up prior to appearing on the stage.

Amateur theatricals were very much the vogue then, for in those days people entertained a great deal more in their own homes than they do now, and worked to make their parties a success, so that if the host or hostess was clever, there was individuality in the evening's amusement, an element somewhat lacking in the present day.

Leaders of this type of entertainment were Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Lewis, of Moray Lodge, Campden Hill. Invitations to their parties were eagerly sought after, for there was a unique touch about them, with always some delightful acting, singing, or artistic foolery, given by a little coterie who styled themselves "The Moray Minstrels." The cards of invitation were designed by Frederick Walker, and were very beautiful.

It was at one of these entertainments that my uncle first met George Grossmith (*père*). He saw what he took to be a very small elderly man with an intensely humorous, very lined face, seated at the piano, making everybody laugh; his age appeared to be anything over fifty. My uncle was informed later that Grossmith was only about

twenty or so. But he never seemed to grow any older looking in all the years to come, either in face or figure.

Corney Grain would also occasionally give his sketches at Moray Lodge. On one memorable occasion, he and George Grossmith gave one together. For the benefit of the present generation, who never had the joy of seeing either, I must explain that whereas Corney Grain turned the scale at about seventeen stone, Grossmith weighed about seven, their figures being in proportion, for Corney Grain was a hugely fat man, and Grossmith looked as though he had never eaten anything since he was born.

Du Maurier was another constant guest and often entertainer, for he would sing in that delightfully sweet voice of his, or act in some trifle or other, such as *Les deux Aveugles*, in which the second beggar was played by Harold Power. This little French piece was said to have given the inspiration for the immortal *Cox and Box* as it was first produced, with its musical score by Sullivan, and its Sergeant Bouncer. In this he played with Quinton Twiss.

Mrs. Arthur Lewis was one of the celebrated Terry family, sister of the great Ellen, and was herself an actress of great merit. In fact, it was said that she might have outrivalled the latter, had she not married early and retired from the stage. She confided to my aunt that although

in her acting days she did not know what stage-fright meant, she always felt dreadfully nervous at her own dinner parties.

My uncle was himself a delightful host, as he had the power of forgetting himself in the service of his guests. Delightfully informal little dances would take place at Acomb Lodge, accompanied by tableaux representing old Master portraits, which would be shown in the studio, the wonderful light and shade effects being produced by means of carefully arranged screens. His actors were principally the children of the Clique, and others living near, Hodgsons, Armsteads, and Calderons. He was always on very good terms with these young people, and it is from a letter of one, written to my aunt on receiving the news of his death, that I quote the following few lines :

“ . . . Mr. Yeames . . . who was so wonderful and charming (and such a favourite) . . . We all adored him and felt that he was like a friend of our own age. . . . He never grew old.”

Then, in their turn, the other Clique members would give parties at which there was generally some clever acting of some sort. The Calderon children would get up wonderful burlesques, of which George, the genius, was the moving spirit. Poor George, who with a promising literary career before him (he had already written, amongst other things, *Dwala*, *Downey V. Green*, and several plays, besides translating a good deal

from the Russian, notably Tchekhof’s *Cherry Orchard* and *The Seagull*), was posted “missing” in 1915 in Gallipoli.

In 1881 there came a picture from my uncle’s brush which he called “Round the Mulberry Bush.” It shows a gay little party of children dancing round an old cannon, whilst a row of Chelsea pensioners in their bright coloured coats sit watching them from beneath some trees near by. Again in his mind no doubt there was that feeling for contrast between youth and age which he always loved. I believe the idea for this picture was given him by Besant and Rice’s novel, *By Celia’s Arbour*, which was published about this time.

Two pictures were painted in 1882. The first was “The March Past,” a study of the courtyard of Hever Castle with a fine old Cavalier seated in an armchair reviewing a little troop of children armed with sticks and brooms “marching past” before him. A typically Royalist family. I regret we have quite lost sight of this picture, which was interesting to us personally, as my uncle painted us all into it.

The other picture of this year was the beautiful “Prince Arthur and Hubert,” bought by the Manchester Art Gallery. This is a large and intensely dramatic work, full of power and pathos, illustrating Shakespeare’s tense scene between the unfortunate young Prince and his

gaoler. The boy prays for his eyesight to be spared :

“ O spare mine eyes
Though of no use but still to look on you.”

The faces of the two almost life-sized figures are marvellous studies of expression.

In 1883 came a small picture entitled “ Tender Thoughts ” and a commission from his brother-in-law, William Moberly, of a portrait group of his family. Mrs. Moberly with her four children are seen in it seated on a breakwater by the sea. The treatment is original, and the portraits very good. But I shall never forget the handful those children were to keep quiet, being full of health, life, and mischief. My uncle had even to call me out of the schoolroom to tell them stories. The worst of it was that they utterly refused to hear the same story twice, and by the time that picture was finished I had gone right through Grimm and Hans Andersen, and was hard put to it inventing fresh yarns. I think my uncle and I were both equally relieved to see that canvas depart for the R.A.

A full-length portrait of Mrs. Moberly herself, my uncle’s only surviving sister, followed, and is greatly treasured by those very children, grown men and women, for shortly after it was painted, death cut short a lovely and valued life.

The following year produced “ The Toast of the Kit-Cat Club.”



‘PRINCE ARTHUR AND HUBERT.’

*From the painting by William F. Yeames, R.A., in the Manchester Art Gallery.
Reproduced by kind permission.*

My uncle took his subject from the life of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, written by herself, when she describes how her father had suggested her to the Club as the *Toast of Reigning Beauty* of the year. The other members objected on the ground of her extreme youth, as she was only about eight or nine years old ; nevertheless, she was immediately brought from her home, and introduced to the Club, where her dainty appearance and beauty took them all by storm and they unanimously called her the *Toast*. In her memoirs she recalls how she was dressed in her best clothes, taken to the Club, and petted and fondled in turn by these men of wit, art, and letters.

The moment chosen by my uncle in his picture is her entry into the dining-room, dressed in white satin and lace, and with the tall headdress of the period. Amongst the faces of the members of the Club one can pick out Steele, Kneller, Addison, and other celebrities of that day, including Christopher Cat himself.

This same year produced a fine portrait of an old gentleman, Mr. Edward Moberly, full of life and character ; and another very attractive one of a little girl, "Toots," daughter of Frederick May, Esq. His portraits were as a rule extremely happy, especially if he took a personal interest in his sitter, for he hated painting a portrait otherwise ; in fact, I do not think he

could do it. It was the same with commissions ; an "order" seemed to have the effect of driving away any inspiration. But with a subject which interested him he did not seem to mind how much trouble he took, the difficulty being in this case to drag him away from his work when finished. He was seldom, if ever, satisfied, and always wanted to improve things. My aunt always said that the pictures which had to be finished in a hurry were the best, as he had not time to spoil them by over-touching.

He also executed several posthumous portraits with great success. A fine example was a commission from the Blind Asylum at Liverpool for a portrait of a much-loved chaplain of theirs, the Rev. Alexander Whishaw. As he had been a cousin of his, my uncle was of course able to work a good deal from memory, and the fact that he had been a very arresting personality also helped materially. But he painted one or two portraits with great success without ever having so much as set eyes on his subject.

His first was of a Mrs. Rowe, a commission from her son, with only a photograph or two to go by, and strict injunctions to paint her in a most extremely unbecoming magenta-coloured dress, because it had been one the affectionate son had presented her with prior to her death. Contrary to expectation, the result was quite good.

A still more difficult portrait was one he was asked to paint of their father by a certain bereaved family, who could only give him a few details as to colouring, general outline, and two very small indifferent carte-de-visite photographs; one of the subject as quite a young man, and the other, totally different, taken later. In fact so different were they, that they hardly looked like the same man. My uncle was extremely puzzled which to use. However, he eventually decided by the younger and better-looking one, ageing it as far as he imagined would be consistent with the time the gentleman had died.

When it was finished, he invited the widow, for whom it had been painted, to come and see it, prior to its despatch to the Exhibition. She arrived, clad in deepest widow's weeds, and accompanied by a very small insignificant little man—her father.

Two chairs stood directly against the wall on either side of the door of the studio, and into each of these, immediately on entering the room, the visitors automatically dropped, and began to gaze in absolute silence at the portrait standing on its easel in the centre of the studio.

So long did this silence continue that the situation began to be painful. At last, wondering what was wrong, my uncle ventured to enquire what they thought of the portrait. But still no answer. Suddenly a squeaky little voice, which

almost made my uncle jump with surprise, for he had not heard him even speak before, issued from the chair occupied by the little man :

“ Oh, no ! Oh, no ! Oh, no ! ”

My uncle enquired if there was anything wrong with the portrait.

But the little man only wailed again : “ Oh, no ! Oh, no ! ”

Anxiously my uncle enquired again, but only the same wail repeated itself : “ Oh, no ! Oh, no ! Oh, no ! ”

Making up his mind to possess his soul in patience, my uncle decided to await events, when suddenly the little voice continued :

“ Oh, no ! Mr. Yeames ! Oh, no ! He was *such* an amiable man, *such* a loving husband, *such* a tender father. And you have made him *so* stern and hard.”

“ Then,” explained my uncle, “ I twigged at once. I had evidently made the lines of the face too strongly defined, so I suggested they should give me another week, and see what I could do by then to improve matters.”

So during the week he toned down the lines, and at the appointed time the widow returned ; this time with her mother, a very large and imposing lady, as large, so to speak, as her husband had been small. Immediately on arrival the pair dropped down on the identical seats as before, and the same terrible silence

settled on the studio. My uncle began to feel anxious.

Then suddenly the mother turned to her daughter.

“ My dear,” she said with a sudden brilliant smile, “ that is *exactly* how he looked the day he married you.”

“ Bless you ! ” thought my uncle. “ That’s done the trick.”

And it had, for when the picture arrived at its ultimate destination from the walls of the Academy, he received a most grateful letter of thanks and appreciation from the family.

My uncle possessed that rare power of turning quickly from grave to gay, and writing on posthumous portraits makes me think of a story of his of the young Frenchman who came to an artist to ask him to paint a portrait of his father.

The artist said he would be delighted. When would the gentleman come for a sitting ?

The son replied that, much as he regretted it, his father could not come, as he was dead.

That, admitted the painter, was unfortunate. But perhaps with the help of a portrait, or even a daguerreotype, he might be able to produce a passable likeness.

The son hastily explained that there were no portraits in existence—which was naturally the reason why he wanted one painted.

The artist saw the point, but explained that it

would make it a trifle more difficult . . . but perhaps even that might be overcome. If he would describe his father . . . colour of eyes . . . hair . . . complexion . . . did the gentleman wear a beard ? Oh ! a military moustache . . . then he had evidently been in the Army ? That of course would simplify matters. Perhaps if he could have his uniform . . . orders . . . etc. In any case he would see what he could do.

So in the course of time a picture representing a dashing military man, complete with moustachios, sword, gold lace and medals, was finished, and the bereaved son invited to inspect it.

He arrived . . . strode up to the portrait, greatly affected . . . stood for a moment transfixed before it, and then exclaimed :

“ My beloved father ! . . . but oh, *how* changed ! ”

In 1885 there came another favourite picture on the walls of the Academy, in “ Prisoners of War.” The scene of this is laid on the quay of a French seaport town, at the time of the Napoleonic wars. Seated on a pile of harbour gear are two young English midshipmen prisoners, guarded by a French soldier, and with a crowd of fisher-folk around them. In the foreground a superior-looking young woman is evidently pleading the cause of the younger of the boys whose wounded arm and pale face is demanding sympathy. The elder of the boys, with hands

in his pockets and head in air, is endeavouring to carry off the unfortunate affair with the most devil-may-care manner possible under the circumstances.

I think my uncle had Marryat's *Peter Simple* in his mind when he painted this picture, but, after it went to the Academy, an old Admiral called upon him to tell him that the picture might almost have been painted to illustrate a real incident that had happened in his own family. As a middy his father had been taken prisoner in the French wars and had been carried wounded before the *Maire* of the seaport town to which the prize had been towed.

Amongst the crowd who came to gaze upon this representative of “Albion Perfide” was the *bonne* of the *Maire's* family, who had previously acted in that capacity in England. No sooner did she set eyes on him than she ran forward and, throwing her arms round the young officer, embraced him fervently. He had been one of her former nurselings. A “bonne” chance indeed for him, for through her good offices his imprisonment was made much more bearable than it would have been otherwise. More fortunate than the fate of one of the Yeames family, who as a naval officer was taken prisoner in the French wars, and died in prison in France.

Of course this picture, now in the Glasgow Art Gallery, was a great favourite with sailor men.

Admiral Oliver, who lived near us, opposite the house occupied by the Bancrofts, was immensely taken by it, and regaled my uncle and me with stories of how he first joined the Navy as a small boy—and it is astonishing how very small they were in those days when they joined up. He described his joy and pride over his first uniform, which included an immense cutlass, a fearsome (albeit somewhat unwieldly) weapon which was buckled to his belt and was a very imposing affair with but two drawbacks. One was that it continually got between his legs when walking : and the other, that it made the fishwives of Portsmouth call after him as he strutted through the town : “ Hullo ! Sword ! Where are you going with that little boy ? ” A remark calculated to upset any dignity short of a Post-Captain’s.

A painting of a pretty woman holding a great tray of exquisitely painted fruit, which he called “ Dessert,” and another of the interior of Ford’s Hospital, Coventry, were also exhibited this year, as well as a small picture called “ A Catastrophe ” —a little girl with a broken bowl of flowers.

About this time my uncle’s old friend, Mr. Schwabe, beginning to feel the years grow heavy upon him, decided to present his valuable collection of English Masters to his native town of Hamburg.

Passionately fond as he was of his paintings, he

generously determined to make it a gift, not a legacy with attendant death duties. So he contented himself with engravings of his favourites in place of the originals, and asked his two friends, Mr. Calderon and my uncle, to go over to Hamburg to superintend the hanging of his treasures.

They gladly consented, but to their disgust, on arriving at Hamburg, they found that instead of the pictures going to the fine gallery that Mr. Schwabe had himself given to the town, two wretched rooms at the end of the municipal galleries had been allotted to them.

Knowing what a magnificent gift Mr. Schwabe was presenting, and the extreme generosity and self-denial entailed in the giving, the two friends were furious at this treatment and refused to begin the work of hanging. A deadlock ensued, whilst they placed the matter before Mr. Schwabe.

The old gentleman was terribly upset to think his gift should be received in such a cavalier spirit, but he wired back the three words : "Proceed with work."

The two friends were almost too annoyed to do so at first, but eventually they decided this would still further upset the kind old man. So they started grudgingly upon their work, doing the best they could with the wretched accommodation accorded them, but having, to their grief, to sky gems and hide masterpieces in corners.

But before they had quite finished, sightseers from the other rooms began to trickle in, and the news quickly spread that a wonderful collection of pictures had found its way to the town. And then the authorities began suddenly to realize that no one was looking at their original collection. The gift horse's mouth was then examined, and the municipality awoke to the fact that they had become possessed of what was at that time one of the finest collections of modern English Masters. Then the tide turned, and things began to readjust themselves—chiefly in the gastronomic direction, for my uncle said that the banquets given them by the Burghers of Hamburg to show their appreciation were the most wonderful he had ever experienced. They were hours in length, marvels of gastronomy, and most thoroughly appreciated by the givers themselves, who would spend these hours (literally) in sheer joyous concentration and absorption (in more ways than one). In the end, the two honoured guests confided to each other that they would almost be thankful to return to the cold mutton of domesticity.

To Mr. Schwabe himself the Hamburgians presented the Freedom of the City, an honour, I believe, he shared with Bismarck alone. He showed me the document soon after it arrived. It was enshrined behind gilt doors in a gorgeous frame, which opened to reveal an exquisite little

painting by Meissonier, behind which again was the precious parchment of the “Freedom.”

The picture named “The Christ-Bearer,” now in the Hull Art Gallery, was painted in 1887. It is a large canvas depicting a tumult of raging water, against which the gigantic figure of St. Christopher is striving mightily with staff in hand. On his shoulder is seated the child Christ. The legend was a great favourite of my uncle's and his interpretation is very fine.

In 1888 my uncle exhibited his “Working the Royal Standard,” illustrating an incident of the Monmouth rebellion. The girls of a certain school worked a banner for the Duke, for which they were severely punished by the cruel Judge Jeffreys. The picture shows a bevy of pretty girls gathered round a large flag which they are embroidering, their attention being somewhat distracted by the appearance of a handsome young cavalier, the bearer of a letter to an old lady seated in an armchair.

Another of this year's pictures depicts a little incident he had noticed in a church on the Continent, of a poor woman kneeling in the abandonment of prayer with a little ragged boy playing with some bits of wood beside her. Although nothing can be seen of her face, hidden in her hands, every line of her poorly clad body bending over the rough wooden pew denotes her agony of mind and concentration of spirit, in

direct opposition to the child playing carelessly with his toys at her feet. Again that tender treatment and love of contrast.

A third canvas was a brilliant portrait of Mrs. Berthold Smith, a Russian lady.

The next year he sent two small pictures—“Baby’s Opera” (a young mother at a spinet with her baby on her knee) and “Her Only One” (also a mother and child). In 1890 he painted another fine portrait, that of his sister-in-law, Mrs. John Yeames.

“Les Enfants du Chœur, Rouen Cathedral” was one of three pictures which went in the following year. The two others were a small canvas of Barnard’s Inn, called “The Law’s Delay,” which was really a study of the quaint old courtyard. He painted in the figures of a lady and a barrister, and a couple of children. Mr. Marks, R.A., gave a sifting for the barrister. A presentation portrait of F. W. Gundry, Esq., for Guy’s Hospital, also went in this year.

My uncle always enjoyed any work which brought him in touch with interesting men; he even enjoyed, I believe, the Committee meetings at the R.A. from which he would generally return with some interesting scrap of information or anecdote, for he possessed the power of interesting himself in almost anything he undertook, and what is even more rare, of interesting others. Occasionally, too, he would bring back

a rough pencil sketch made in the intervals of work by one or other of the Academicians, several of whom, like Frederick Walker, seemed to find it difficult to keep their hands from pencil and paper. Sir William Richmond, I fancy, must have been such a one, judging from a small collection of drawings made on what must have been his blotting pad, and which I discovered amongst my uncle's papers. They are marvellous little impressions drawn by a master hand. One of them is an excellent portrait of Sir Edward Poynter, P.R.A.

Another of these drawings was a favourite puzzle by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, R.A., which he called "My Wife—and My Mother-in-law." By careful examination one can discover both ladies in the drawing, looking at it from exactly the same angle.

Sir Lawrence was full of good stories, not always quite easy to follow on account of his strong foreign accent. But he always enjoyed them so much himself, that no one could resist enjoying them also. I know I did, even if he did make me feel occasionally as though I was riding a mental hurdle race; he would talk so quickly.

He would turn suddenly upon me, for instance, and ask in a sorrowful voice if I had heard about the poor tramp who had caught such a shocking cold from sleeping in a draught in a field with

the gate open ? Or (it was about the time that motors were first coming into use) of the Skunk and the Weasel who were walking along a country road when an automobile dashed past. The Skunk burst into tears, and the Weasel accused him of fear. "No, no," replied the Skunk. "It was my grandmother. My dear dead grandmother. The smell of that machine brought her back to my mind."

Alma-Tadema built himself a wonderful house in the Grove End Road. One of the first "artist wonder-houses" of the day ; for previously the old painters had been content to live as other more ordinary people. But with soaring prices, imagination with regard to bricks and mortar was given rein, and we watched its erection, wondering what each fresh excrescence could mean, with keenest interest. As soon as it was completed Sir Lawrence took my uncle and me over it to explain its beauties. The rooms seemed mostly to lead one from the other, and we came to the conclusion there was not one in which a secret could be told. If it was not a door, it was a window which opened into the next room. Of course, it was very wonderful ; and the joy of Americans who came in shoals to see it,—and of course, its great artist creator. In fact an invitation to one of the celebrated fortnightly Tuesdays was sufficient in itself to bring a Yankee across the Herring Pond.

The studio was a glorious room with a little gallery and an alcove with a silver ceiling (aluminium, I believe; when aluminium was precious, and not used for saucepans, as now). In the studio stood the wonderful piano on the cover of which was inscribed the autographs of half the musical and vocal celebrities of the world, there being a vellum lining for that purpose. There was a little ante-room like the background of one of his own pictures, with tiny panels each painted by a brother artist, and a dining-room replete with oak and looking like an old Dutch interior. Whilst, to crown all, you reached this kaleidoscope of architecture by a flight of golden stairs (burnished brass, to be correct) which led from the garden gate to the imposing front door.

Once through this impressive entry—a short, sturdily built man with twinkling eyes, cheery smile, hair parted in the middle of a broad forehead, and small tawny beard, would hurry forward with an hospitable handshake, and bustling you into his studio to look at pictures of Greek and Roman ladies reclining on the most marvellously painted marble, would talk in rapid, unfluent English, telling stories quite outside his art, and beaming when he brought a smile to the lips of his guest.

RECOLLECTION IX

Changes in St. John's Wood—My uncle goes to Majorca—Majorca pictures—House-hunting—Portrait of Mrs. Eumorfopoulos—“Le Roi s'amuse”—Panel for the Royal Exchange—“Defendant and Counsel”—Portraits of Mrs. Winfield and Colonel Nightingale—“Children of the Chapel Royal”—Mr. Prinsep's story of Pietri—The Paris Exhibition—Gerôme's dinner-bell—Entertainments in Paris—Meissonier's Scotch gardener—My uncle decorates Hanwell Church—Becomes Librarian to the Royal Academy—A lecture on Art and Books—Becomes Curator of the Painted Hall, Greenwich—Hogarth's love story—Nelson's coffin—Portraits of Mrs. Stephen Smith and William Moberly, Esq.—An operation on his eye—Is taken ill at the Athenaeum—Leaves London—Their golden wedding—“Sailing orders”—“Emigravit.”

AND now we come to the last years of these recollections, for, alas ! :

“The bird of Time has but a little way
To fly, and Lo ! The bird is on the wing.”

The old circle of the original St. John's Wood friends was fast merging into the shadows of the past. The Clique was no more. Even the district itself was changing rapidly. Its comfortable, irregularly shaped Early Victorian houses were being swept away to make room for hideous flats and tenement buildings. Old Lord's Cricket Ground, the scene of the triumphs of W. G.

Grace, A. N. Hornby, A. E. Stoddart, and others, had entirely lost its delightful atmosphere of a country cricket ground. Giant stands had done away with the "open-air" feeling—and incidentally the view of the game we had been wont to enjoy before. Worst of all, the children of the Clique and other R.A. families were growing up, and flitting from their nests ; and when that happens it invariably makes for restlessness on the part of the parent birds, for the homes are no more what they were, the empty rooms and silent hours are depressing, and it often ends in their going also.

And thus it was in our case—evolution. The girls married, and the boys' work took them afield. There was a general emptying of the old home, until at last in 1891 my uncle and aunt decided to let it, and look for a temporary and smaller dwelling elsewhere—perhaps to come back later. But as so often happens in this life, the road "later" generally ends in a cul-de-sac. Acomb Lodge with its happy memories passed into other hands—for the "Bird of Time" had flown.

But before they finally moved, my uncle took a trip to the island of Majorca, partly for health's sake, and partly in the hope of striking fresh fields for painting. He was charmed with the place with its exquisite colouring of sea, sky, and scenery ; no doubt taking him back in memory

to the Italy he knew and loved so well. The quiet dignity and restful leisure which pervades the island appealed immensely to him, and he made many studies of the beautiful old buildings and quaint courtyards. He told me that when he landed he felt he had stepped back, Rip Van Winkle fashion, amongst the houses, the customs, and, apparently almost, the dresses, of two or three hundred years ago. The world beyond that cradle of blue sea in which it lay wrapped in its own affairs and past history seemed to mean nothing to Majorca, and the restful change did him a great deal of good. Two small pictures, "*A Minstrel of Majorca*" and "*Court and Courtiars*," appeared in next year's Academy as a result of this visit.

A portrait study which he called "*Dona Liza*" was also exhibited this year.

On his return to England my uncle and aunt started house-hunting. They had originally intended to take a house in the country, of which they were both very fond; but owing to a good deal of work of one sort and another, such as teaching at the Academy schools, judging at the art section of South Kensington, duties which entailed my uncle having to come up to town almost daily, they eventually took a house at Hanwell, near Ealing.

In those days Hanwell was almost a village on the confines of London and, moreover, possessed

fine golf links, a great inducement to my uncle, who loved golf. They only rented the house for a few months at first, but the months eventually lengthened into years, and instead of continuing to look for a house with a studio, my uncle hired a fine room in a magnificent semi-abandoned old Georgian mansion, of which there were several fine specimens, relics of past grandeur very much out of keeping with the jerry-building going on around.

These old houses with their beautifully proportioned reception and ballrooms, decorated with Adam's ceilings, Grindling Gibbon's carvings and Italian marble mantelpieces bore evidence to what must have been lordly hospitality in those days when dashing bloods would come posting gaily down from town in rumbling coaches, or astride prancing steeds. And from their saddlebows would hang heavy holsters, for highwaymen drove a thriving trade between London and its neighbouring villages, as the heavily barred lower windows of these mansions testified.

Hanwell even possessed its haunted house, which, not knowing its sinister reputation, my uncle and aunt nearly took, but luckily did not, my uncle objecting to it because the entrance to the coal-hole was so low that it would have been awkward for their cook, who was rather stout. So Alice saved the situation ; and the eventual

tenants told my aunt that they had a perfectly horrid time, what with knocks and noises and other sinister sounds. So bad, in fact, did these become, that the lady became quite ill with nerves, and as they could not afford to live elsewhere and leave the house untenanted, they consulted a clairvoyante, who told them that a dreadful deed had once been committed in the house, a son of a former occupant having murdered a servant girl and thrown her down the well. This cheered up the tenants somewhat, as they knew there was no well, and they paid the usual water rates.

Shortly afterwards, however, a mysterious damp spot appeared in the vicinity of the kitchen. Workmen were called in, the flooring taken up and a disused well was discovered. But there, I regret to say, the story ends, as my aunt could tell me no more. Whether any bones were discovered, and, on being discovered, were re-buried in the orthodox way, about which all proper-minded ghosts for some occult reason appear so particular, I am afraid I cannot say.

Looking at Hanwell from the railway now, one can hardly imagine that such a Cranford atmosphere could possibly have existed as they found there on arrival. I remember there were two delightfully Early Victorian sisters who immediately won their way to their hearts by artlessly explaining that they only called on new-

comers whom they felt quite certain their dear mamma would have liked them to know. As they were only tender young things in their early seventies, one could understand the advisability of their reliance on their defunct mother's more mature judgment; and naturally my uncle and aunt felt extremely flattered by their calling on them.

In 1893 my uncle painted a portrait of Mrs. Eumorfopoulos, and "A portrait of a Gentleman," the gentleman in question being a life-long friend, Mr. Shannon, a director of Coutts' Bank. The portrait is painted in a somewhat severe style—a sombre background with no accessories to detract from the thoughtful face in the centre of the canvas. An exceptionally brilliant and charming man, he transacted a great part of Coutts' extensive French business, particularly that connected with the Orleans family, who looked upon him as an old and valued friend. It was really he who pricked the bubble of the surprising Humbert fraud—principally amazing from the point of view of the gullibility of the French public. The Humberts with astonishing audacity had applied to Coutts for a loan, and Mr. Shannon went over to Paris to report. He described the Humbert *ménage* as quite magnificent, with liveried servants and all the appurtenances of much wealth. As he passed through the hall he

observed through an open door (left open no doubt on purpose) a dinner-table set for a large party, loaded with silver and lighted entirely by wax candles (M. Humbert intimating he could tolerate no light more vulgar). He was invited to stay for their "simple meal" but refused. When the subject of the loan was mooted by Madame—for Monsieur, posing as the wealthy connoisseur of art and valuable bric-a-brac, explained he knew nothing about business, leaving such things to his wife—Mr. Shannon inquired what securities were offered, and was told bonds of great value would be forthcoming, but as they were unavailable at the moment, being locked up in a certain safe, the *bijouterie* of Madame would be placed at the disposal of the bank. Mr. Shannon said he hardly thought an old-fashioned firm like Coutts would be prepared to transact business on such terms, and took his leave. On his return to London he said he did not like Madame's Marseillaise accent and advised the bank to have nothing to do with them in spite of their reputed wealth, and the acceptance of them by Parisian society. Coutts' refusal helped, I believe, to rouse the suspicions of the French authorities, for soon after the mysterious safe was forced, found empty, and the fraud unmasked.

A striking work, "Le Roi s'amuse," appeared in 1894. Although merely the figure of one man, Henry III of France, it arrests attention not

only with its painting, but its subject. When everything in life had lost its savour, this king would spend his days watching the antics of a basket full of puppies which he carried suspended from his neck. The execution and handling of this picture is of the most perfect finesse, for, although occupied in a most trivial unkingly pursuit, the artist never leaves one in doubt for a moment that the man is a king. The details of the costume and surrounding furniture show an intimate knowledge of the period; whilst the expression of utter ennui on the royal face is a most intriguing piece of work.

This canvas went to an exhibition of art in St. Petersburg, and we heard it had been purchased by the Tsarina, who had greatly admired it. But it eventually returned to England, apparently because she had been advised that it savoured too much of a satire on royalty, whereas it but illustrated an historical fact.

This same year saw a large panel painted for the Royal Exchange at the request of Mr. Horsley Palmer of the Mercers' Company. The subject given to my uncle was the granting of a Charter for the London School by Henry VIII to Dean Collett. The style of the work of this picture is rather different from any of his previous painting. It was as though he had unconsciously caught the technique of the period itself.

Had his next picture been painted in later years, it would have been dubbed a "mystery" picture, for it raised quite a controversy over its story. As my uncle had never thought of one, but had merely evolved the subject from a pictorial point of view, he was rather hard put to it to answer the many questioning letters he received, one lady going so far as to say it was keeping her awake at nights. The publishing firm of Cassell's even offered a prize for the best story on the subject, which my uncle was asked to judge.

This picture, called "Defendant and Counsel," presents a pretty woman dressed in velvet and sables with a big picture hat, seated in a solicitor's room, and being interrogated by counsel in wigs and gowns. Their tense expressions and the worried look on the girl's face all point to some very vital point being under discussion.

It is now in the Bristol Art Gallery. The custodian there said he had so many people asking him for its story that out of self-defence he had had to concoct one himself about it, which he regularly repeated to questioners. But what it is I really do not know.

In 1896 my uncle painted a charming portrait of his mother-in-law, Mrs. Winfield, a beautiful old lady of ninety years of age. This was by no means the first time she had sat for her portrait, since her uncle, Sir David Wilkie, had repeatedly

“DEFENDANT AND COUNSEL.”
From the painting by William F. Yeames, R.A., in the Bristol Art Gallery.
Reproduced by kind permission.



painted her as a lovely young girl into more than one of his pictures. And in spite of her great age when my uncle painted her, she still retained her wonderfully soft pink and white complexion, even after many years' residence in India.

Prices for pictures in Sir David Wilkie's time were very different from what they became later. For instance, Sir David only received £600 from the Duke of Wellington for his fine picture of "Chelsea Pensioners Reading the Gazette of the Battle of Waterloo."

The old Duke evidently thought even this was a terrible extravagance, for when Wilkie went to receive payment for it, he was surprised to find the Duke had it all ready for him in specie, which he commenced laboriously counting out. Whereupon the artist suggested it would be less trouble if he wrote him out a cheque; but the Duke shook his head.

"No, no," he replied, "I cannot do that, I would not like my bankers to know I had spent such a lot of money merely on a picture."

In 1898-99 there followed "Children of the Chapel Royal" and two portraits: one of Charles Burton, Esq., for fifty years churchwarden of Hanwell Church, and the other of Colonel Nightingale; and in 1900 a charming portrait group of his niece, Mrs. John Scaramanga, and her two boys.

In the same year the Royal Academy appointed a commission to go to Paris to attend

to British interests in the art section of the Exhibition taking place there that year. The men chosen were Sir Edward Poynter, P.R.A., Valentine Prinsep, R.A., Hugh Armstead, R.A., John Lorimer, A.R.S.A., Sir Arthur Clay, Colonel Jekyll, Mr. Spearman, my uncle, and later, I believe, Sir Isidore Spielmann.

Before their departure Mr. Eaton, Secretary of the Academy, gave them a dinner. Whilst it was in progress, the conversation turned on the Exhibition of 1855, which took place at the Crystal Palace, built for its reception. The principal guest for the opening was Napoleon III, Emperor of the French, and Mr. Prinsep mentioned that as a good deal of uneasiness prevailed for fear of an attempt being made on the life of the French monarch, the London police, under his uncle, Lord Somers, were warned and made responsible.

But it appears that Napoleon, nervous of trusting himself entirely to British protection, had brought with him his own private detective, the celebrated Pietri, who in his turn had imported a number of his French subordinates.

The knowledge that Pietri was on the spot leaked out, and put the English police so much on their mettle that on the great day they collared every suspicious-looking foreigner they discovered in the vicinity of the French Royalties,—the result being that by evening a very tired and

worried Pietri was anxiously scouring London for his staff, which had unaccountably disappeared, and was only unearthed from various police courts in the early hours of the following day.

The British committee arrived in Paris to find that the French artist Gerôme was the president of the art section. He appears to have been a somewhat curiously tempered man, continually coming to loggerheads with his own compatriots. In fact Henry Davis, R.A., who spoke French like a Frenchman, was told off specially to keep him in good humour. This was no small undertaking, but he managed to steer the barque out of many a maelstrom. There was one particularly "edgy" time, when Gerôme, after a big explosion, threatened to resign, which would have been very awkward as it would have entailed upsetting all previous work, had not Mr. Davis's consummate tact smoothed things over.

Gerôme kept a great dinner-bell by his side, which, when discussion became too general, or he wanted to speak himself, he would ring violently, adding considerably to the din already in progress. When he paraded the galleries the bell would be carried before him by a small boy, so that when he required anything, he would ring it again, and everyone would know where he was.

At that time Lord Salisbury was not in very good odour in France,—I forget what little

contretemps had upset our sensitive friends. But one day, whilst the work of selection was in progress, a Frenchman strolled into the British section, and seeing a pile of engravings with a portrait of Lord Salisbury, thick with dust on the top, wrote with his finger across the glass the word *Cochon*.

A young Englishman, or rather I should say Scotchman, for I believe it was Mr. Lorimer, immediately stepped forward, and said with the greatest suavity and in excellent French :

“ Pardon, Monsieur, pray do not write your name there. We keep a special book for the signatures of distinguished visitors.”

But this was the only little *affaire* of its kind, for nothing could exceed the kindness and hospitality accorded by the French to their guests. For every night there was some invitation or entertainment.

M. Loubet was President of the French Republic at the time. He gave a great banquet at the Elysée to the heads of the Exhibition sections, at which my uncle and Mr. Davis were given the seats of honour, but whether this was in token of respect for British Art, which they represented, or because they could speak French better than the others, neither could decide. The dinner was excellent, served in a room which appeared a mass of gilding and tapestry. My uncle made the acquaintance of the Director of

the Comédie Française, a M. Glasetro, a charming individual, who offered to send him tickets for himself and for as many of his friends as he wanted, at any time he liked. He said he cherished a great affection for England and her people, and always went to London for his holiday, if he could, because "the smell of its smoke was so healthy." All I can say is: "Chacun à son vilain petit goût."

This banquet was naturally a somewhat stately affair. But this could not be said of another, given by the French artists to their British confrères. The dinner was an immense success, not so much on account of its food, which, although very good, was not so elaborate as at the Elysée, but because of the entertainment which followed. This was presented voluntarily, and, I believe, spontaneously, by the principal actors and actresses of the Théâtre Française, who, after the meal was over, had the tables moved to the end of the room to form a stage, on which, in their ordinary evening dress, they gave a most finished performance.

An afternoon reception at the English Pavilion, given by Colonel and Mrs. Jekyll, was also most successful. My uncle was particularly pleased by the little daughter of his host and hostess, who carried round buttonholes and bouquets for the guests.

Amongst the stories he brought back my

uncle had one or two about Meissonier, the great French painter, who appears to have been a somewhat odd character. For one thing, he disliked hearing of anyone possessing anything superior to what he had himself, and invariably capped any remark to that end by saying he had something much better. This fault grew into such a habit that once, when a friend began to complain of his painful corns, Meissonier burst out: "Oh, but that's nothing to what I have! Mine are much finer!"

Hearing that Scotch gardeners are supposed to be the best, he engaged one. But to his annoyance he soon discovered that his new gardener always capped any information of his with something else. This was distinctly trying, and had not the Scot been such a good gardener he would have dismissed him, but instead he grumbled to his friends.

One day, however, after a little tiff with the Scotchman, he confided to a friend at breakfast his great desire, to humble the conceited man, but he had so far found it impossible. The friend had an inspiration. Washing the hard roes of some herrings they were about to eat for breakfast, they carefully packed them into a neat paper packet and sent for the gardener.

Meissonier then informed him that he had just had some foreign seeds sent him and asked him if he could tell him what they were?

The canny Scot took the seeds in the palm of his hand ; and having examined them carefully, smelling them, and turning them over with a brawny finger and thumb, announced they were “so and so” (reeling out a long and totally unintelligible name).

Meissonier was delighted, and suggested that as he seemed to know all about them perhaps he could grow them for him.

“Aye, aye,” replied the gardener. “But it wull tak aboot three weeks. If ye’ll come then, may be ye’ll see them sprouting.”

The friends were extremely pleased with the success of their little plot ; and punctually in three weeks’ time they appeared in the garden, ready to gloat over the coming opportunity of taking a rise out of the conceited Scotchman.

Looking totally unabashed, the gardener met them, and in answer to enquiries as to how the seeds were progressing, assured them they were coming on nicely, and with proper soil and temperature should do very well. If they would kindly look at the forcing bed, he felt sure they would be pleased.

Meissonier and his friend exchanged glances of triumphal meaning, and followed the gardener.

The Scot lifted the frame. The two gentlemen nearly fell over each other in their anxiety to see the “fraud” . . . and their gaze was rewarded

by the sight of several neat little rows of herring heads protruding from the soil.

During their sojourn at Hanwell, where they were extremely happy, my uncle decorated the chancel of the local church as a labour of love. He, and an Italian assistant, did the work entirely between them. It was in fresco, and carried out in a somewhat original manner, giving a fine conception of St. Michael slaying the Dragon; of the Virgin receiving the news of her Conception, and of Charity with her Cloak.

He was far from well at the time, and suffered from occasional fits of giddiness, doubtless the forerunner of his subsequent serious illness. On more than one occasion he had to lie down full length on the planks of the scaffolding, till the attack wore off. That the work should ever have been finished was in itself a tribute to his strength of will and determination.

Hanwell was only intended as a stepping-stone to their eventual retirement in the country, for which they longed, for both of them were passionately fond of sketching, and a holiday was no holiday without their paint-boxes. In fact my uncle refused the Keepership of the Academy because he and my aunt so disliked the idea of living in the heart of London, without trees or garden. But one thing after another, in the way of duties and work, kept him there up to his illness.

Two posts in particular engrossed his attention. One was that of Librarian of the Royal Academy, which he held from 1896 to 1911, and the other, the Curatorship of the Painted Hall, Greenwich, not a very strenuous post as a rule, but during his regime more so than usual, as he had to superintend the restoring of Thornhill's ceiling, another "scaffolding" job, curiously enough.

His great love of books made his first post a most congenial one. He was a great reader, and books were almost a fetish to him. He could not bear to see one ill used, and as children we were brought up with a very proper respect for them. To dog-ear or tear out pages, to lay one on its face, or forget it in the garden—well, if we offended once, we never did so again.

Not only was he a great reader, but an unconscious student, his great maxim being that one was never too old to learn. Had he been a wealthy man he would first and foremost have possessed a fine library. As it was he interested himself in that of the Academy.

His feelings, however, with regard to books are better expressed in his own words, and I shall therefore append the substance of a lecture he gave to the students of the Royal Academy when first taking over his duties of Librarian. The general trend of Art, has, I am quite aware, gone through considerable changes since my uncle's time, but as there are certain fundamental

truths which have arrived to stay, I think my uncle's lecture may still be of interest to the Art student, no matter how "modern" he may be.

I feel I must mention my gratitude to Mr. Ernest Wright, the present Librarian, for preserving it, thus giving me the opportunity of adding its pages to this book, as it is practically the only record of anything in his own handwriting I have been able to include, for he always destroyed everything of this sort.

With a few deletions, I give it as it stands :

"Mr. Keeper and Students of the Royal Academy.

It is my privilege as Librarian of this institution to address you to-day . . . on the subject of books and the contents of the library. . . . And in attempting to do so, it is my hope that my words will not assume the character of a lecture, but be rather a talk about the interest to be found in books, and the way they should be studied in order that we may find in them the means of gaining instruction and obtaining greater knowledge, sympathy, and enthusiasm in the pursuit of the Fine Arts.

Books, we may say, are the records of man's researches and thoughts in the innumerable fields to which his mind has been directed, and books, whether in manuscript or in print are, as it were, the crystallization of these thoughts

in permanent form, suitable for transmission. As this spirit of investigation has been carried on in every intellectual pursuit, we must not be surprised that much has been written and published on the subject dearest to our hearts, I mean the Fine Arts. The aim of the Librarians of this institution has been to collect as thoroughly as possible all works dealing with this subject. Apparently they have done so with considerable success, for the opinion has been expressed by competent judges that our library bids fair to be unique in its own speciality. It is restricted to the subject of the three Arts, and these run into many collateral branches, such as Architecture, ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman, Mediæval, Renaissance, and Oriental art. Also there is ecclesiastical, domestic, and ceramic art, there are books on costume of all ages and countries; biographies of artists and natural histories. There are showcases containing magnificent folios illustrating the various contents of the picture galleries of Europe; of the museums containing examples of the sculpture of all times, the pottery, and arms of all nations. Books in a more modest shape will be found dealing with Art from its technical, practical, philosophical, and abstract points of view. In short, I may say that anyone who desires to obtain elucidation on anything connected with Painting, Sculpture, or Architecture

can readily find it in the library for the asking for it.

Information is what we obtain from books, and it will, I think, be readily acknowledged that the more information we have about the work we are to do in our lives, the more are we likely to arrive at happy results. Art in the world at large has been compared (and very properly so) to a growing and mighty edifice. Each age and individual artist contribute to this great structure of noble thoughts and high aspirations. Without the work of the past we should not be able to do as well as we do now, and the artist of the future will depend in a measure for success on what we are now giving to the world. If you read the lives of men who have obtained eminence in the Arts, you will find, with a few rare exceptions, that they have been conversant with the works done by their predecessors, which in many cases they had studied carefully ; and as to those who had not done so and became great solely on the strength of the genius Providence had granted them, I for one believe that however great they were, they would have achieved greater things still, had they been more appreciative of what had been done before them.

Now the opinion is held by some people that the close study of the works of other artists destroys originality, and the contrary opinion is held by others. One may well say there is truth

in both views, and if the result is so different in each case, the difference arises through two distinct methods being adopted by the student in each case. The man who loses originality by the study of other men does so because he limits himself to imitating the work he admires. His eye and hand do everything for him. Materially we can say in consequence that he adopts the outward line, the light and shade, and manner of his model without diving, as he should, into the spirit of the master. On the other hand, the man who profits by the study of work he admires seeks to understand how his master saw and interpreted the beauties of nature. Thus he obtains the key that will enlarge his capacity of appreciating and valuing the truths and beauties that lie hidden in nature. If, then, he is able to render by his technical knowledge the emotions aroused in him, he must inevitably be true to his individuality, and be original in his productions.

I will try to explain my meaning by giving two or three illustrations. In his early works Raphael imitated his master Perugino so faithfully that at first sight no difference can be seen between the pictures of master and pupil. But soon the young man added to the great qualities of Perugino a grace, an insight into human character and expression that he had himself sought out direct from nature. Again, we find that early in life he made careful copies from

studies of drapery done by Mantegna, showing that he perceived that his master knew more about this branch of art than Perugino, and that much could be learned from him. In truth, Mantegna has the most thorough knowledge of drapery. His folds, however, are not agreeable. They seem to be the work of some men who, fascinated by their knowledge of anatomy, insist and emphasize it in all their delineations of the human figure. We might say that Mantegna gives us the anatomy as well as the laws that regulate the arrangements of folds. The young Raphael evidently grasped the profound learning in them, but added to the same arrangement of folds a grace, an ease and a breadth which not only gave them more beauty and greater style, but made them also look more like nature.

From Raphael I will go to another man of towering genius. I mean our own Turner. He likewise in his earlier works imitated many landscape men such as Claude de Lorraine, Poussin, and others. But he was evidently intent on mastering what teaching could be extracted from these accomplished and learned painters. Line and composition he learned from Poussin, pellucid atmospheric effects and joyous feeling from Claude. As soon as he had learnt how they interpreted nature, and by what means he could imitate them, he added what more he could see in nature for himself, giving full play to

the impressions nature made on him, and becoming the very greatest of all original and poetical landscape painters. Even when he let his fancy apparently run riot in his latest works, we are still aware of a largeness of treatment and nobility of thought that stamp his work as the highest art, and are due surely in a great measure to his acceptance of the precepts he derived from his accomplished predecessors.

I will trespass on your patience by giving a third example to illustrate my meaning. We shall find it in another art, I mean the art of war, as practised by its greatest exponent in the history of the world, Napoleon the First. He at first distinguished himself as an artillery officer of inferior rank at the siege of Toulon. Afterwards he quelled a revolution in Paris, and on the strength of this he was appointed, at the age of twenty-four, to be Commander-in-Chief of the French Army in Italy, at that time in Lombardy. Baron de Thiebault, from whose memoirs I have the anecdote I relate, had served with him in putting down the rising in Paris, and went to his house to bid him good-bye. He found the young General's heavy travelling carriage at the door, and to his surprise, servants were loading it not only with trunks, but with an astonishing number of books. On enquiry he learnt that when Bonaparte had been appointed Commander-in-Chief to the Army in Italy, he

immediately ordered every possible known book to be bought for him dealing with every battle that had been fought on the plains of Lombardy, so that he might study them during his journey south. As a great many battles have been fought on this plain, you may well imagine that he carried away with him a large assortment of works. Here we see a man who no doubt was conscious of his extraordinary capacity in military matters, but still had recourse to the experience and guidance of his predecessors in order to ensure success in the work he had before him. Had his departure not been so hurried, he no doubt would have gone to the libraries of Paris, but not being able to do so, as you see, he took his library with him.

My contention, therefore, is that the more we study the works of other men, bearing in mind that we search to understand their interpretation of nature, the more are we likely to learn how to see nature from our own individualistic point of view, and in time to produce work with an original stamp on it.

When we decide to study other men, we go and look at their works, and assuredly the contemplation of masterpieces is most beneficial, as it arouses in us admiration for what is great and noble and stimulates emulation. But there is this drawback in examining a complete work by a master in his craft, namely, that he has in most

cases achieved the great desideratum of possessing the art of concealing his art, so that it is difficult and sometimes impossible to obtain a knowledge of the road he has travelled over to arrive at the results before our eyes. It seems to me that once we are imbued with admiration for a man's art, our best way to get at the inner man and understand his *modus operandi* is to look at his studies, his drawings and sketches, for as these are mostly done direct from nature we are enabled to see in them what first attracted his attention in nature. We can thus follow his efforts to interpret his feelings, either by character of line, by arrangement, composition, by light and shade, or by harmony of colour.

Many of you, like myself, when visiting the studio of an eminent artist, have had the privilege of seeing a portfolio of his studies, or a series of sketches in clay, or rough drafts and plans for buildings. And probably, like myself, you have felt that the artist was admitting you into his confidence and showing you the working of his thoughts, his special love, and his methods for conveying the emotions that the study of nature had evoked in him. If you agree with me that this is both a privilege and an advantage, you can readily obtain both at any time in the library here, for owing to the invaluable work done by photography and the various processes of mechanical reproduction, we have collected here

facsimiles of the studies and drawings of almost all the great men who have obtained distinction in the Fine Arts.

Time will not allow me to mention the names of all those whose admirable studies are to be seen here, but I will touch upon a few of them, and choose men of somewhat recent date. The painter Watteau, for instance, was Flemish by birth, but painted with great success in France during the early part of last century. In fact he infused with his manner the French art of subsequent generations. . . . His complete works are, it seems to me, tainted with the artificiality and affectation of the society he lived in and painted for. In them he depicts an ideal and happy world, where, in beautifully laid out gardens with terraces and sparkling fountains, shepherdesses in sac dresses and dainty bodices are dancing, playing on lutes, and making love. All the men and women are without exception graceful and lovely both in form and movement. This surfeit of beauty extends also to the trees in the backgrounds, which are luxuriant in foliage and colour. Looking at his pictures, however delighted we may be with the lovely female grace, we long to see a contrast in the shape of an ordinary or even an ugly object, a rugged tree, or a stiff decrepit creature. In short, one wishes to see something more like real life, something to bring us back to the earnestness

and consequently the vigour of the world we live in. Now look at his studies, all of which are of single figures or heads. In them we see that the artist, working from the living model and face to face with nature, has with his intense feeling for grace produced most lovely and completely refined figures. And at the same time the action, expression, and subtlety of feeling are most true. One sees in these studies that the artist, gifted by Providence with the capacity to detect beauty and grace, has with reverence and fidelity to nature reproduced them in his drawings and revealed them to the world of art of his day and of the future. Each study appears to me to be almost complete and sufficient in itself for a picture. When, however, he combines a number of them in one composition, they produce a kind of nausea, like a surfeit of sweet things. A great deal of French art has been affected by Watteau's revelation of beauty, but as only his outward mannerisms were imitated by his successors, without a true understanding of the genuine merit of the master, his art in weak hands soon degenerated into the sugarplum-box style, as seen on the *bonbonnières* of French sweetmeat shops.

But, on the other hand, see what a different result has been achieved when understood by an intelligent man. Our admirable and distinguished painter, Charles Leslie, who is so remarkable

for the grace and beauty of his female figures, was a great admirer of Watteau and was unquestionably greatly influenced by him, but only for good. He was imbued with the spirit of Watteau, which enabled him to see nature in the lines of beauty, and made him paint such loveliness in face, form, and pose, equal to that of the French master, but remaining always original and 'Leslian.'

You will notice, if you look at Watteau's heads, that he evidently admired a certain style of face—the pointed oval one with somewhat high forehead, delicate features, and always a slightly turned-up nose—*nez retroussée*—that the French love so well. This latter peculiarity gives piquancy to the face, and though one cannot say that ladies who possess it have claims to great beauty, they have an attraction greater often than a more regular cast of features will give. Now this fascinating pertness in the features you will see carried almost consistently through every part of the figures in Watteau's studies. It is to be traced in the way the cap, hat, or bow is set on the head, in the way the folds drape round the figure, in the turn given to the figure, even when seen from behind, suggesting always what we might call a coquettish nature. If I have dealt somewhat at length with this painter, it is because he is one of the great men in the history of Art, having discovered a new field of beauty.

You will find in the library several works on Meissonier, as prominent a man in the art of the present century as any. In one, . . . presented to the library by Madame Meissonier, you will find reproductions of his drawings, all worthy of study by those who desire to discover how he achieved his greatness. In his early works we recognize him as a thorough draftsman, and skilful in the technique of oil painting, but successful only as an apt imitator of Dutch art. But soon we see him going to nature and admirably rendering his subjects in open air, daylight and sunlight, and pursuing an original and independent course. With a patriotic and national instinct, he next paints incidents in the campaigns of the Napoleonic period, of a trivial character at first, but eventually culminating in such subjects as '1807—Friedland,' and 'La Retraite de Moscou.' In the latter of these pictures, we see in all the slush and mud, the great leader riding on his white charger at the head of his staff. He is still bearing up against all his misfortunes, with fixed determination in his face, whilst dejection is painted in all his followers, with perhaps the exception of Marshal Ney. No one can look at this work without being struck by the truthful realization of nature in winter garb under a cloudy sky, and by the intense dramatic rendering of human feeling. In this achievement Meissonier no doubt takes rank

with the great artists that have given imperishable work to the world.

Another Frenchman and pupil of Meissonier, the painter Détaille, about whom we have a book beautifully illustrated with facsimile drawings, is well worth studying, especially as he has been over here and produced pictures of English life, such as the Tower of London, the Band of the Coldstream Guards going down the Mall in St. James's Park, and other military subjects. His drawings are of the most delicate character, reminding one somewhat of Holbein. I wish to call your attention to a careful study of two railway trucks. One would think it was impossible to deal with a more ungrateful subject for the pencil, but whether he knew from what point of view to take those trucks, so that perspective and foreshortening should give interest to them, or that beauty can always be found in what is earnestly rendered, I do not know, but I think you will agree with me on looking at their drawing, that there is charm in these trucks. The lesson we derive from this is that whatever we reproduce from nature we should paint with all the sincerity and love we are capable of. Only then will the most trivial object be invested with interest and dignity.

We have a fine work on Jules Breton, and another on Millet, containing most of their pictures in photogravures, accompanied by preparatory studies and notes.



"PRISONERS OF WAR."
From the painting by William F. Yeames, R.A., in the Glasgow Art Gallery.
Reproduced by kind permission.

Jules Breton and Millet both painted French peasant life. The latter, if not the former also, in order to enter more fully into the spirit of their subjects, lived in the country and adopted the manners, dress, and habits of those they painted. But for all that we see nothing ungainly, gross, or rude in their rendering of the French yokel. The reverse is the case, for their paintings are true to life, yet full of reserve, of a certain dignity and a touch of grandeur. Unquestionably they were men of refined temperaments, but that alone would not account for such excellence. The very fact of looking at their studies reveals their secret, for one cannot help noticing that these two men had modelled their style as draughtsmen on Raphael, Michael Angelo, and other Italian masters. Indeed it is due to the influence of these forerunners that their works, however true to nature they may be, still possess that elevating character that invariably accompanies all fine and great work.

Coming now to English art, we have a portfolio of reproductions amongst which are drawings by Constable, which are not only attractive, but highly instructive. This master of landscape painting impresses one as aiming chiefly at brilliancy of effect by means of strong light and shade. This is intensified by his own peculiar handling of pigments. In these studies we see somewhat palpably that he seeks to adapt to a

fine composition an impressive distribution of large masses of darks and lights, so as to obtain what we artists call a fine 'blot.' It is, therefore, all the more interesting to see by the side of these shades, drawings of trees, most delicately pencilled, every bough being drawn with the utmost care and attention as to grace of outline.

He well knew that however freely a man can use his brush, he can only do so with advantage to his picture when, by previous careful study and knowledge of nature, he is fully conversant with the objects he is representing.

You are all so well acquainted with Lord Leighton's work that I need hardly say much about it. To render beauty of form and the proportions of the human figure were his chief aims consistently throughout his brilliant career, and however high may be your estimate of his genius as displayed in his finished works, I am sure you will form a higher one still if you look at his studies, where the efforts and aspirations of the inner man are openly revealed to us.

Dilating on the very many treasures that lie stored up in the library . . . I wish to say a word about the best way of studying them. On this matter I feel somewhat diffident about expressing a decided opinion, as different temperaments must be taken into account, and a manner that may suit one man may not suit another. I have noticed with pleasure that most students

visiting the library use their pencils, and very properly so, as in our profession the pencil is the chief medium through which we must store up knowledge of our art, and a student should at all times be taking pencil notes. If, however, he wishes to obtain a thorough and complete understanding of the art of the man whose works he admires, it would be advisable for him for once to devote himself to making an exact copy—a very facsimile of a drawing or painting of a picture by that man. For though we may be constantly looking, let us say, at a figure by Raphael, and delighting in the beauty of the line he adopts, and imagining that we are taking valuable mental notes, it is only when we try and imitate that line that we come face to face with the difficulty of rendering it, and discover what great effort it requires to make any approach to it. We then realize how much there is in it, and understand what subtlety of feeling and high conception ruled in that great mind, and what a delicate and trained hand was needed to reproduce what he saw in nature. If again you are struck by a fine composition with numerous figures in it, and wish to understand it thoroughly, it is not to my mind sufficient to make a hasty sketch of it. It is better to copy most faithfully from a good engraving, if you can't do so from the original, the leading lines and quantities that rule the composition. A painter dealing with a large

composition is like the general on the battlefield. They have both a given space over which to distribute their forces to the best advantage. The man of war must select the spot where the chief attack is to be made, the man of art where the chief interest of the picture must lie. All their men and figures must work towards this spot where the fate of the battle or the fate of the picture is decided, but battalions and groups must have all their work planned out for them, their numbers and positions must be suitable to work out the scheme as a whole. Too many or too few men or figures are both defects, in one case they encumber the ground and bring confusion, in the other they leave vacant spaces and weak points. It has very properly been said that the test of a complete and well-balanced composition is that you cannot take out a single figure or line without weakening the whole.

One or two drawings executed in this spirit of exactitude from one man is all that is needed. They will teach you more than ever so many hasty sketches. Be assured that great men are so profound in their grasp of the law of nature, that we cannot 'skim' off their knowledge. To gain it we must dig deep for it. It requires all our energy, and we must give our hearts and minds to the work, to obtain an understanding of it. If you are convinced of the advantage to be derived from this earnest study, it will follow

as a matter of course that you will take to reading about the men you have drawn from, you will be desirous of knowing how they worked, what their individual characteristics were, also about the time they lived in, and the influences, whether religious, philosophical, or poetical, that affected them as men and artists. Once started upon this course of investigation, you will take delight in reading those books that explain the causes that produced great men, and you will emulate them in reading those works which gave them the inspiration for many of their highest flights. To thoughts inspired by the tales of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, the plays of Shakespeare, the *Faust* of Goethe, are due many of the greatest and finest productions in Literature and Art. These works and those of many poets are on the shelves of the library, and some time devoted to them may give you subjects or motifs for pictures, or at any rate raise the standard of your thoughts to a higher and nobler level. We must always remember that the genuine artists have this in common underlying all their work—namely, the determination to arrive at truth. I hope that what you have heard from me may give you increased interest in books and induce you to make more frequent visits to the library. And I will conclude by assuring you that it will only be a pleasure to me, as Librarian, to give you any assistance that lies in my power."

My aunt always became very quiet when "William" grew at all excited about anything, and Mr. Wright made me laugh with a little story he told me. It was so typical of the dear couple.

He and my uncle were examining a book of Gibson's exquisite and ethereal drawings in the library one day, when she came in.

She joined them as they were looking at the study of an arm.

"Phew!" cried my uncle impatiently, with the little foreign gesture he invariably used. "They have no guts in them—no guts."

My aunt looked up at Mr. Wright with a little smile, and quietly remarked: "But there are no guts in an arm, William!"

The other post, that of Curator of the Painted Hall, Greenwich, also appealed to him immensely; a good deal, I think, because he had always loved "the Service" ever since the "Cocked Hat Kings'" days of his childhood.

The salary was totally inadequate as a means towards livelihood. In fact, after my uncle had paid his fares to and from Greenwich, his small mess bills for lunch, and had given the tips he loved to bestow on the Pensioners—the "old Buffers," as he used to call them—he was definitely out of pocket. But he enjoyed the work, and liked the company of the naval men he met. There were one or two with whom he had a little trouble, men who considered that

Quarterdeck discipline could be carried into the picture gallery, or imagined in their touching and childlike ignorance that the cleaning and varnishing of old Masters could be carried out in much the same way as they cleaned and varnished their hulks at sea. They had even permitted their wives to try their scrubbing brushes and soap on the pictures—as my uncle to his horror and consternation discovered one lady busy one morning!

The majority, however, were clever, friendly men, who did not interfere with what they did not understand and welcomed him cordially as an honorary member of their mess. In fact, he looked forward to guest nights, as he always enjoyed meeting men who had “achieved” in life (or the next best thing, “attempted to achieve”), and in consequence made many friends.

I remember his coming back one evening, saying he had just met the son of Joseph Chamberlain, “a young man with a clever, well-cut face who should go far.”

As my uncle had known his father, he was very pleased when young Chamberlain asked to be introduced to him. My uncle told us that his “manners were very good”—a delightfully Early Victorian appreciation from one great Victorian to the son of another!

He also renewed the acquaintance of Sir Edward Goschen, then in the Admiralty, whom he had not met since they were young. I believe

Sir Edward had been one of his sitters for those early crayon portraits which my uncle made in his youth.

The pictures of the Painted Hall were badly in want of supervision, Thornhill's beautiful ceiling requiring urgent attention. The wonder was that it was not worse, in view of its proximity to the river. The restoration of the ceiling was a delicate and difficult task. He had scaffolding put up, and spent hours perched high up near the roof of the hall. He spared no pains and often worked with his own hands. Its present beautiful condition is a lasting testimony to the skill brought to the task. When, ultimately, he resigned the Curatorship, the Admiralty presented him with photographs of the ceiling framed in oak from a tree planted in the grounds by Queen Elizabeth.

The floor, he found, also required attention ; in fact it had all to be taken up and relaid. He therefore drew up a new design, but used the original material laid down by Sir Christopher Wren.

The Dome of St. Paul's is another specimen of Sir James Thornhill's work. His daughter married Hogarth, whose love story Mr. Oliver, Secretary at the Admiralty, told my uncle one day, while showing him some clever drawings of ships and barges, which were hung in the Conservative Club at Greenwich. He said they were by Hogarth, which surprised my uncle very

much, as they were totally unlike any of that artist's work he had seen. It appears that Sir James had a pretty daughter whom Hogarth loved and wished to marry. Thornhill, however, refused his consent, saying that his daughter should marry no one but a painter ; which might have been a roundabout way of giving Hogarth his *congé*, as he was not an artist then. But the suitor was undismayed, and promptly began to study art. And since he was at Greenwich at the time, his first efforts were studies of shipping.

At Sir Michael Culme-Seymour's request, my uncle went down to Portsmouth to arrange the Nelson relics on board the *Victory*. These included the Spanish flag captured by Nelson at Trafalgar, which had covered his coffin in St. Paul's.

The story of Nelson's coffin is rather interesting. Whilst at the Admiralty one day, Mr. Stansfield asked my uncle to look at some fresh Nelson relics which had just arrived. Several other officers joined them, amongst them a gentleman whose name he unfortunately failed to recollect. This man told them that his great-grandfather had served under Nelson at the Battle of the Nile, during which action the French ship *Orient* was blown to pieces. His ancestor saw the mainmast floating, secured it, and had it made into a coffin. This he presented to Nelson, saying that as it was made from the

mast of the famous ship destroyed in one of his great victories, it would be a fitting casket for his body when the time came for his soul to leave it, which he only trusted would be many years distant ! Alas, it came but too soon, as we know. Nelson, it appears, was so pleased that he insisted on taking it on board his ship and carried it with him wherever he went. But from the moment it came on board, they were dogged by such persistently bad weather, that the crew attributed their ill-luck to the coffin, and remained unsatisfied until Nelson at last consented, perhaps because he was himself such a bad sailor, to leave it on shore. Accordingly it was left at Naples in charge of the Hamiltons. But it is in this very coffin that his body now lies in the Crypt of St. Paul's.

My uncle's outside work now occupied so much of his time that he did not paint as much as formerly. Also his eyes were beginning to trouble him. But he did a full-length portrait of me in 1902 ; a small picture called the "Close of Day" in 1903 ; and in 1906 he exhibited a very fine portrait of William R. Moberly. "The courtyard of a French Village Inn," and another French study of the "Boulevards of Dinan" appeared in the two years following, and finally a small water-colour in 1910, "White Cliffs, Broadstairs," painted a good many years previously.

This was his last exhibit, as in 1910 Fate struck him the most cruel blow that can befall a painter. The same shadow that had darkened the days of his two friends, du Maurier and Briton Riviere, now fell across his path—the tragedy of impending blindness.

For some time past he had been troubled by his eyes, and in November Dr. Eason of Guy's Hospital performed an operation. The result was a great improvement, but he soon realized that the days of his painting were over. He had always schooled himself to face facts, and was, moreover, a brave man morally and physically, so without repining he set about the task of making the best of what was left him. He continued his other work, as keenly interested as ever in everything going on around him. His step, wonderful to relate, was the step of a young man; his heart, as always, the heart of youth.

If he had troubles, he bravely hid them, for he never carried his heart upon his sleeve. He had always a cheerful welcome for friends, ever ready to do them any possible little kindness he could, and very worried if he could not. He was still able to carry on his Librarian work, and other matters connected with the Academy. At home he worked in the garden just as he had done in the old St. John's Wood days, and it was always full of flowers.

Then, with little or no warning, the activities

of his life came to an end, for on June 30th, 1912, he had a seizure at the Athenæum. Several members saw him fall, and rushed to his assistance, but with his usual indomitable pluck he insisted on travelling home alone, assuring them it was nothing.

He managed to get home, but thenceforth began a long and weary illness, and several times his life was despaired of. But the will to live was there, allied with the loving care and devotion of his wife, and eventually he was sufficiently restored in health to enable him to travel down to Teignmouth, in South Devon, where they settled for his remaining years.

The mild climate suited him, but, although he became wonderfully better, he was never able to walk more than a few steps with his nurse from room to room, or round the garden on sunny days, for he never really recovered the use of his left side.

His brain, however, remained almost as clear and active as ever. He took the keenest interest in everything around him, old friends and new, politics, and passing events—events, which in those early days of the War were full of stirring interest. Except when in pain (and occasionally he suffered terribly) he was always pleased to see his neighbours, and talk over the present, past, and future. His memory, especially of his early days, was wonderful. Indeed, had it not been

for these quiet times I could not have collected all the material for this book. As it was, we would spend many pleasant hours together, delving in the past, recalling happy times, and piecing together events and dates, when he would occasionally put my memory right, or tell me some story perfectly new to me.

He even tried to draw once or twice, but his eyesight failed him, and he had to give it up, which was the most sore trial of all. But through the whole of his long illness I never really heard him grumble or complain at the blow which had laid him low, although to his virile nature the enforced inactivity must have been terribly trying. He had always been so active in mind and body, that he hardly knew what illness meant until these last years. He had only lost one tooth in his life, in spite of the fact that he had been a great smoker, rolling his cigarettes in the old Russian fashion.

His pale golden hair, which in his youth (those days when he had acted as page to the King of the Revels), had been golden-red and wavy, had now faded to white. But, curiously enough, his face never really took on the appearance of age, and although, perhaps, after a bout of pain, it would look drawn and whiter than usual, it remained always young.

On August 18th, 1915, my uncle and aunt celebrated their golden wedding. He had just

been through a bad period of illness, with terrible pain. In fact it was a moot point at one time if he would live to see the day. But again his wonderful vitality carried him through.

He lived not only for that day, but for three years longer, resuming his old interests, from the birds that came to be fed round his wheel-chair in the garden, to the latest news of his three grand-nephews in the Royal Air Force at the Front.

In 1916 he told me he had just received a delightful letter from Admiral Moresby, the author of *The Two Admirals*, in which he had written : "I am now nearly eighty-seven . . . just waiting my final sailing orders."

"And I, too, Mary, am doing the same," he said.

Two more years ; and then on May 3rd, 1918, he received those orders.

And on the cross which marks the spot where we laid him, in that beautiful hillside cemetery, within sight of the sea, changeful as life itself, on one hand, and the still purple moors on the other, my aunt had the same word inscribed which marks the tomb of Albert Dürer in Nüremburg :

"**EMIGRAVIT.**"

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